

QUR. No. 7, 8, 1980 - P. 270 2

Founded by : RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

THE MODERN REVIEW

JULY, AUGUST



1980

Vol. CXXXXIV No. 7, 8.

Whole No. 871, 872

NOTES

World crises and their effects.,

Dāmodar Gujarti's contribution in measuring thereof.

The following crises in the bosom of the globe changed its destiny in some way or other :

China/Nepal 1960

India/China 1960

Cyprus 1963-64

North Vietnam 1964-68

Arab Israel 1967

U.S./U.S.S.R (Cuba) in 1962.

The most important of these is the Cuban crisis of oct : 1962. The Cuban missile crisis brought an end to the cold war tensions that had been growing steadily though unevenly between the USSR. and USA since the termination of world war II. The tensions

were serious and dragged the globe close to nuclear destruction. An awareness of mutual danger inherent in nuclear warfare made the two great antagonists change the basic nature of their relationship and adopt more cooperative measures and finally led to the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963. Of the several kinds of changes observed by the Scientists i.e. statisticians the most important was that the intensity of "conflict in Soviet-U.S. relation, Would be lower after than before the Cuban crisis and that there would be convergent after behaviours within the test ban negotiations after the crisis of 1962." The reciprocity in Soviet-US interactions before and after Cuban missile crisis has been examined by the statisticians to determine if there was a greater correlation in their behaviour in the wake of this major event.

The most important factor that is of interest to us is that the statistical procedure used to determine the significance of these changes is based on the dummy variables strategy Suggested by Sri Damodar Gujarati in his article "use of dummy variables in Linear Regressions: A generalisation" published in the American Statistician (1970) and his other articles in the said magazine.

Will our scientists and statisticians be in a position to guide the world's politicians towards a more healthy and peaceful path?

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR AN ARDENT SOCIAL WORKER :

[N. RAJAMANI

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was one of the foremost women politicians and social workers of India, whose persistent energetic policies had given birth to many of the leading political organizations of India. Like Sarojini Naidu, Dr Annie Besant, Kamala Nehru and others Amrit Kaur possessed a firm mind within her frail body. Though she was of royal descent, yet she never chose an easy and gay life. Instead she took an active part in the political life of India and constantly observed the political trends in the country, thereby accumulating an enormous energy for dedicating her whole life for the freedom struggle. She got a golden opportunity for serving under the guidance of the 'Father' of our nation, which too enabled her to face all difficulties with extreme courage and confidence.

EARLY LIFE

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was born on 2nd February, 1889, as one of the seven children of Sardar Sir Harnam Singh of Kapurthala State. Raja Harnam Singh served for many years as the manager of Kapurthala Estate, in Oudh. Even after his retirement from active service in the year 1895, he had been receiving pension equal to the salary which he had been receiving from the Estate.

Harnam Singh was himself an enthusiastic political worker. He was a member of the

Provincial Legislative Council for a number of years and he served as a member of the Governor General's Council. He was an elegant orator and for this reason the British Government conferred the Knighthood upon him. He received 'Raja' as a hereditary distinction. As many people in those days the 'Raja' somehow adopted Christianity with all his family members. Because of this, he was disinherited from the Kapurthala State.

Amrit Kaur was educated in Sherborne School for Girls in Dorsetshire and London. She was so brilliant in her studies that later on she could attain the unique honour of becoming the head of the same school, from which she passed out. In spite of her western education, she had deep religious convictions, which helped her to gain access to Gandhian ideology. She attained perfect knowledge in English, French and Music and she could play well on the Piano.

As we could see from her later life she depicted keen interest in sports and sportsmen. She had a particular liking for the game of Tennis, and witnessed many Tennis tournaments. This was due to the fact that she herself played the game when she was young and had won many championships. But she never neglected the womanly qualities in managing her household. She was the only daughter in the family and her mother had delicate health. This compelled Amrit Kaur

to look after her house, most of the time. This function, Amrit Kaur carried out with cheer and vigour.

POLITICAL LIFE

In those days 'Raja' Harnam Singh's house served as a meeting ground for many Indian politicians, who later on took active part in shaping the destiny of our nation. Amrit Kaur came into contact with versatile politicians like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Surendranath Banerji and Madan Mohan Malaviya. Their association gave her the urge for sacrificing her life of ease for the sake of breaking the yoke of foreign domination. When the great leader of India—the non-violent Mahatma—returned back from South Africa in 1915, she immediately went to him to obtain his advice and blessings for her future course.

The magnetic personality of the Mahatma attracted the young princess and she decided to devote her whole life to work for the freedom of the nation. She also started serving the great leader from 1935 onwards. As secretary to Mahatma, she closely observed the various political movements and took extensive notes of the various momentous meetings which took place between the Mahatma and the Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Azad, C. Rajagopalachari and others. Due to the inspiration which she received from Gandhiji and his ideologies she plunged into the freedom movement without the least hesitation. Like others she had to undergo horrible prison terms.

Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the eminent historian and author of the History of the Indian National Congress, had given a vivid description about the sufferings of Amrit Kaur during her detention. He writes as follows: "She was arrested at 8.30 p. m.

on 3rd October, 1942 at Kalka. She was informed that she was to be taken by car to Ambala Jail and was allowed to take with her, her bed roll, a bag containing her spinning wheel, her Bible and Gita which she insisted on taking and a brass vessel for drinking water. Her suit case containing her clothes was not allowed with her as she was told that she was sure to be sent to Lahore, the only jail for women detained or sentenced for more than one month in the Punjab, within a day or so. She was, however, never sent to Lahore and had to manage for a month with no change of clothes."

No mercy was shown to the frail woman prisoner and she was sent to the women's ward. Its filth was indescribable. The excreta of pigeons and rats by dozens was her constant companions. There was a foul smelling latrine which she refused to use on hygienic grounds. There was no place to bath except in the open. No repairs had been done for ages—large mud plasters were falling away. One such fell on her shoulders but she escaped with only bruises. There was no food arrangements for her after being arrested at 8.30 p.m. She was given badly cooked thick chapati with equally badly cooked unclean dal served cold and in a filthy platter at 1 p.m. the following day.

All these inhuman treatment take their toll on her health. After three weeks of solitary confinement she felt somewhat relieved when she was joined by five more co-workers. After eight weeks in jail, she was reduced in weight by over a stone and the jail authorities felt it safer to release her. However, she was kept in her house under police vigilance for about 20 months. During her internment, she lost her brother.

After such a horrible experience, she was finally released from internment in 1945, when the historical Simla Conference began.

SOCIAL WORKER :

As an educated, high-class woman, she never felt shy of social work. She took keen interest in the life and welfare of Indian women and held responsible posts in many women's organizations. All India Women's Organization owes its existence to Amrit Kaur and Sarojini Naidu. In 1930, she became the Secretary of the Social Section of the All-India Women's Conference, held in 1931-33. She served as the Chair-woman of the All-India Women's Conference. She was the Chief architect for obtaining increased percentage of voting power for women in the New India Bill, which was drafted for removing sex disabilities for taking office. In 1933, she gave evidence before the joint committee on Indian Constitutional reforms, on behalf of the All-India Women's Organization. She was elected President of the All-India Women's Conference in 1928 and was the Chair woman of the All-India Women's Fund Association in 1937-41. Her constant fight for equal electoral rights for women bore fruit when the Constituent Assembly assumed office in 1946.

She served as the first woman member of the Advisory Board of Education. But she resigned this post in 1942 as a protest against the policy of the Government. Like Gandhiji she also acted as the saviour of the unfortunate backward women's community and worked for their social and economic uplift. While in Mahatma's ashram she bathed and washed the Harijan children. She took keen interest in women's education and was one of the founders of Lady Irwin College of New Delhi. Like our present Prime Minister she undertook extensive foreign tours and participated in many world conferences on social and educational problems. She represented

India in the UNESCO and she was unanimously elected one of the three vice-Presidents by the International Gathering in London in 1946.

HEALTH MINISTER :

Amrit Kaur contributed a great deal in shaping the policies with regard to health and hygiene. She served as the chair-woman of the St. John Ambulance Association, the Chief Commissioner of St. John Ambulance Brigade and member of the Managing Body of the Red Cross Society in 1948. Hence her reputation as the leading social worker earned its deserving reward when free India found its first cabinet under the illustrious leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, as Amrit Kaur was rightly chosen as the Health Minister of the first Cabinet.

As a responsible leader of medical and social forces that heal the mind and body of fellow countrymen, she received the Honorary Degree of Humane Letters in 1958 from the Mac Murray College of America. As the Health Minister she carried her social work with even more greater vigour till her death on 6th February, 1964.

She received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Law from Smith College of Massachussettes. The citation reads: "By birth a princess, by conviction a servant of mankind. For sixteen years a secretary and associate of Gandhi, a founder and later head of the Indian delegation to the World Health Organization, of which she has been President.....one of the great citizens of India, one of the world's leaders in the building of a substantial basis for a lasting peace".

This is indeed a fitting tribute to a great soul.

HELP YOURSELF BY HELPING OTHERS

R. L. KHANNA

In his famous 'Ciredo' circulated to friends Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru said, "The law of life should not be the competition of acquisitiveness, but cooperation, the good of each contributing to the good of all". This is the vital principle of social cooperation—the key-stone of a rational code of social conduct.

Co-operation means "working together to the same end". The expression 'social co-operation' is to be interpreted in its most comprehensive meaning. It does not signify 'co-operation' between individuals or groups against individuals or groups. Nor does it refer to 'compulsory' co-operation that superiors (bosses) insist on from underlings unless it is in keeping with a comprehensive co-operation with the aims and goals of society as a whole. Nor does it apply to co-operation with a mere temporary or local majority unless it is compatible with a broader cooperation for the attainment of human aims and goals. It is an ethical ideal. Like integrity it has no need of rules. It is a social habit or attitude.

CO-OPERATION THE LAW OF NATURE

Cooperation is the law of nature. Man is, by nature, a cooperative animal. Seneca (The Younger) said, "We are members of one great body. Nature planted in us a mutual love and fitted us for a social life. We must consider that we were born for the good of the whole". Society and its members exist for the benefit of one and other. The great philosopher—King Marcus Aurelius, remarked,

"We are made for cooperation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another then is contrary to Nature and it is acting against one other to be vexed and turn away."

ESSENCE OF MORALITY

Morality is nothing but a set of ideas or principles as to duty and good behaviour. In his "Death in the Afternoon," Ernest Hemingway said, "What is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after." It is a sense of discrimination between 'I ought or I ought not'. Social cooperation is the essence of morality. And as a writer explains morality is not something we need to think about only in a few high and heroic moments. It is a daily affair, almost an hourly affair. "The moral code by which we live is shown every day, not necessarily in great acts of renunciation but in refraining from little slights and meannesses and in practising little courtesies and kindnesses." It is truly described as the goal of ethics.

ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL COOPERATION

Two neighbours, one blind or the other lame, were called to another place. The blind one carried the cripple, the latter directing the way and thus they made the trip together in safety. By each doing what each could their mutual objective was attained.

Social cooperation is the basis of economic

life. As Alfred E Smith explains without the help of others, any one of us would die naked and starved. "Consider the bread upon our tables, the clothes upon our backs, the luxuries that make life pleasant; how many men worked in sunlit fields, in dark mines, in the fierce heat of modern metal and among the looms and wheels of countless factories, in order to create them for use and enjoyment."

The very subsistence of mankind depends upon social cooperation. The subsistence cannot be brushed aside as materialism beneath contempt. For as Philip Wicksteed has it, "A man can be neither a siant, nor a lover, nor a poet, unless he has comparatively recently had something to eat". Or as Mahatma Gandhi puts it more picturesquely, "To a man with an empty stomach food is God".

Although the advantages of social cooperation are to a great extent economic, they are by no means solely economic. Social cooperation promotes all the values of modern civilization—material, spiritual, cultural and aesthetic. And as Bentham said, "Quantity of pleasure being equal, pushpin is as good as poetry."

It is only through social cooperation that we can make a success of democracy. The government of the people postulates cooperativeness. As John Dewey remarked, "A democracy is more than a form of government, it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience". Dissent has its place in democracy but not deliberate non-cooperation by parties or groups seeking to cure the evils of democracy by fascism: In his famous novel, "The Rebel", Albert Camus says, "Revolt and revolution both wind up at the same cross-roads: the police or folly".

It is only through cooperation that international peace and amity can be

promoted. It is the key to interpersonal as well as international ethics. The ideal international situation is one of cooperation as an antidote for mutual hostility, mutual aggression and war. It is the core of the concepts of "One World" and "World Government". The first Secretary General U. N. Trygve Lie rightly said, "Wars occur because people prepare for conflict rather than peace". He added, "The United Nations was founded on the principle of world cooperation. We can only achieve full success in creating a decent world if the nations work together in that direction. There is no other way. The alternative to world cooperation is world war which in the contemporary age of science means 'universal' death'. As Bertrand Russell visualized it may mean, "the end of human life, perhaps of all life on the planet."

MARK OF MATURITY

Cooperation is the mark of a mature man. Maturity means leaving the childish constellation of egotism and competitiveness behind and developing kindly cooperativeness. Persons who fail to do so remain immature whatever their age. As a psychiatrist points out, "They are obnoxious as partners in a business, they are irritative in a gathering, they are quarrelsome in a twosome". A childishly egotistical and competitive person falls prey to anxiety, stress, strain and remorse. Really it is not necessary to blow out the other person's light to let your own shine. Maslow and other psychologists consider self-actualization (i.e. man's constant striving to realise his full inherent potentials) as the fundamental goal of human personality. They have noted that kindly cooperativeness is one of the characteristics of self-actualized persons.

MUTUALISM

Finally it needs emphasis that there is no inherent conflict between individual interest and interest of the society which is a union of individuals. The goal of each is the same—happiness, satisfaction, well being, self-interest and social interest are covered by social cooperativeness. A writer has chosen 'mutualism' to describe this situation. 'Mutualism' means, "a condition of symbiosis (i.e. living together) in which two associated organisms contribute mutually to the well-being of each other". Lack of mutualism can militate against self-interest. The story goes that a farmer imported some especially fine seed-corn and produced a crop that was the envy of his neighbours. When they sought some of the seed, he refused point-blank, fearing to lose the competitive advantage he had gained.

The second year, his crop was not so good; the third year results were even worse. Suddenly it dawned upon him that the poor quality corn of his neighbours was pollinating his corn. His selfishness had caught up with him.

Cooperativeness is the golden-mean between pure egoism ('I first') and pure altruism ('You first') and blends them in a rational harmony. This may be illustrated by a homely example given by a philosophical writer: A fire breaks out in a crowded theatre in which the audience consists solely of pure-egoists. Each rushes for the nearest or the main exit, pushing, knocking down or

trampling on any body in his way. The result is a panic in which many people are needlessly killed or burned because of the stampede itself.

The fire breaks out in a theatre in which the audience is made up solely of altruists. Each defers to the other—"After you, my dear A-fouse"—and insists on being the last to leave. The result is all burn to death.

The fire breaks out in a crowded theatre in which the audience is made up solely of cooperativists or mutualists. Each strives to get the theatre emptied as quickly as possible with as little loss of life as possible. Therefore all act much as they would as a fire drill and the theatre is emptied with a minimum loss of life. A few who are farthest from the exits or for other reasons may perish in the flames; but they accept this situation and even cooperate in it, rather than start a stampede which would lose far more lives.

In short it is by social cooperation that we help each other to attain our individual goals and so to attain the goals of society. Social cooperation is the panacea for resolving crisis at all levels—individual, national, international. It is also the hall-mark of maturity of persons, societies and nations. It is the basic formula of peace, growth, success. It is the foundation of human relations. It is life itself. If you can't love your neighbour as yourself, you should at least be cooperative with him to your mutual interest and in the interest of society. By helping others we help ourselves.



CHANGE-OVER TO PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

NIRMALENDU BIKASH RAKSHIT

The All-India Jurists conference held in Delhi in November of the last year raised a moot question in regard to our governmental form. It was claimed that the Cabinet system was unsuitable to Indian constitution and hence we should make a change-over to Presidential form of Government.(1) Of course, such a controversial issue can hardly be settled unanimously and, instantly, some jurists and statesmen have come forward with a severe voice of dissent. But it seems that the pro-changers have a stronger case for themselves.

The game of numbers which is now being played in Indian politics seriously betrays a lack of proper respect for the principles of Parliamentary system as it is popularised by England. It is now widely believed that India's Parliamentary democracy is at the cross-roads. The disease was diagnosed long ago but, it is pointed out, the charisma of the late Nehru and the popularity of the Congress averted the inevitable crisis. A well-disciplined and monolithic party with its formidable majority both at the Centre and the states and with Pandit Nehru at its hierarchy virtually softened the ugly features of our political landscape and some of the gross defects of the cabinet system could hardly be discernible. But the changed political situation marked by the demise of the great national leader, the emergence of different political parties in the administration of the states, the erosion of the Congress party and the consequent vacuum in the political arena has engendered a natural convulsion in

the public-mind. The recent split in the Janata party at the centre is also an obvious pointer to the weakness of the cabinet system.

This is why, some thoughtful persons are now seriously speaking for a changeover to the presidential system. The situation of unusual instability and uncertainty which characterises the present political condition of many of our states after the fourth general election, has already generated serious scepticism regarding the suitability of the cabinet system in Indian Political life. It is now realised, in the context of frequent rise and fall of heterogeneous coalitions in some states and the game of numbers at the centre after the breakdown of the Janata Government, that the makers were too optimistic about our political morality. Now the supreme need of our country is to dispel the sense of uncertainty and instability which has gripped the people at large.

In the background of such a political turmoil, some eminent waiters have stoutly urged a revision of the system. They have suggested that only the introduction of a presidential form of government both at the Centre and in the States can arrest the disastrous tendency in the country. Political leaders like Ashoke Mehra and Balaraj Madhok also have favoured presidential system of government.(2) Mr. Justice K. S. Hegde(3) of the Supreme Court has pleaded for the presidential government on the ground that it would dispel the situation of instability which characterises our

present political life. According to B. P. Sinha,(4) a former Chief Justice of India, Indian constitution needs a revision so that the presidential system can be introduced. This is immediately necessary in the States where, the learned jurist thinks. We have been able only to produce confusion, if not chaos. Even K. M. Munshi,(5) one of the members of the Drafting Committee who once championed the case of cabinet system in India in the Constituent Assembly, has now honestly admitted that it has failed here due to some obvious reasons.

MAKERS' INTENTION :

It is widely recognised that despite the existence of the Presidential office, the constitution provides for a cabinet system of government. Thus, India has a parliamentary system of government with an elected president at the head.(6) The choice has been deliberate and significant. The constitution, of course, provides for a President. It does not mention whether he is the Head of the state or of the government. Prof. K. T. Shah,(7) however, introduced an amendment in the Constituent Assembly by which the President was to be designated as the 'Chief Executive and Head of the state'. But Dr. Ambedkar emphatically pointed out that such a designation was only contrary to the nature of the office they intended to create in a cabinet structure. In the same mood, Nehru observed that they wanted to emphasise the ministerial character of the government and that power really resided in the ministry and in the legislature and not in the President as such.

Of course, in the Constituent Assembly, K. T. Shah, Kazi Karimuddin,(8) Shibbanlal Saxena(9) and others ably championed the case for a Presidential system of government as prevalent in America. G. S. Gupta(10) suggested that the presidential office should

be based on the American model with, of course, slight modifications. Some speakers like Mahboob Ali Baig, however, pleaded for the introduction of a plural executive of the Swiss type and held that such a system would offer due representation to the different communities and factions of the Indian electorate, and, at the same time, would combine responsibility and stability.(11)

These writers emphasised that the weaknesses of the cabinet government centred round its instability and flexibility. They believed that it would, if introduced in India, disrupt the political democracy of the nascent country.

But, ultimately, the consensus of the Constituent Assembly was overwhelmingly in favour of the cabinet system as popularised by England.(12) There was, in reality, no deep cleavage of opinion on the principle of cabinet government. The most powerful argument of the critics was that only by making the executive independent of the legislature that the stability and strength could be guaranteed. This was countered partly by the view that the English experience showed that weakness of the government was not a necessary feature of the cabinet system, and partly by the view that an ambitious President might precipitate a crisis by frequent quarrels with the legislature.(13)

Dr. Ambedkar opined that the Chief merit of the cabinet system was its blending of stability with responsibility and hence it definitely surpassed the presidential system in administrative qualities.(14) Cabinet system, Alladi pointed out, placed the executive and the legislature in a harmonious relation and thus avoided the frequent conflicts between the organs of government.(15)

He, further, pointed out that clashes between such organs were not infrequent in America and that, in some occasions, it really

created constitutional statemates. An infant democracy like ours, he observed, could not afford to take the risk of perpetual cleavage, feud or conflict between the legislature and the executive. Under the parliamentary system, on the other hand, there is a daily and periodical assessment of the responsibility of the government. Munshi, however, countered all attacks on the cabinet system and held that this system produced a stronger government because the members of the Executive and the Legislature were overlapping and that the heads of government controlled the legislature.(16)

There was also a further point peculiar to India: if the Presidential government were set up in the units also, how could the Rajpramukhs be fitted in the new democracy? But the most telling of all was the simple argument of experience. The British model was familiar with the people of India for a hundred years and, this is why, it had a far better chance of success than the American system.

EXPERIENCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

But our experience of three decades has sufficiently shown that the intentions of the makers have pathetically been frustrated by the self-seeking leaders. Existence of some dozens of political parties none with well-knit national organisation and discipline and the resultant chaos and confusion both at the centre and the states have let loose an orgy of political violence, instability and uncertainty which can hardly favour the nourishment of the cabinet system. But, presidential initiative is still lacking and the problem is perhaps steadily heading to a national crisis. In retrospect, it may be argued the cabinet system has failed in India

and it requires a changeover to a constitutional alternative.

The havoc which has befallen on the Congress in the general elections of 1967 has merely aggravated the situation and, with the emergence of coalition governments in the political panorama, things have drifted from bad to worse. It is now safe to conclude that coalition governments in India have a lamentable legacy and the general people of most of the states have heaved a sigh of relief as soon as such governments crumbled down and Presidential administration introduced. The constituent parties have been at perpetual odds, but yet they have combined, before or after the election, with a common programme in which the points of similarity have been amazingly numerous.(17) They have formed the government and soon have precipitated crisis due to their inherent tendency to tarnish the image of other constituent parties. Often such coalitions have torn asunder due to the cynical floor-crossing by the self-styled political leaders who have chosen to barter their political loyalty for personal gains.(18) This trend has often generated political turmoil and it is now realised that such ties of opportunism and politics of convenience can lead us nowhere.(19)

At the centre, however, there was one party-rule since the beginning and it is only after the sordid discomfiture of Mrs. Gandhi in 1977 that a period of uncertainty has burst forth. The Janata Party which came to power with a comfortable majority was rather a hybrid amalgum of four parties(20) and due to inherent reasons, it was soon broken into pieces. Charan Singh's government survived yet a shorter period due to its numerical weakness. No doubt, the resultant mid-term poll offered a stable government, but it rather betrayed the defects of the cabinet system

once again. If Congress(I) would have failed to muster majority-support, either a coalition government or another mid-term election would have been the eventuality.

In the context of such affairs, it may rightly be suggested that a change-over to presidential form of government is necessary. Under this system, the Executive Head, who is also the Head of the state, is elected for a fixed tenure and he forms his cabinet from among his favourites. These ministers hold office during the pleasure of the President and legislative displeasure does not affect their tenure.(21) Once they are chosen by the Head of the State, the ministry can function independently of the shifting will of the majority and ambitious design of the defectors.

CRITICS' FOLLY :

But some lawyers, leaders and writers have harshly criticised the proposal on several grounds. Analytically, their allegations are the following :

1. The proposal is a constitutional contrivance to grant more powers to a particular person (i.e. Mrs Gandhi).
2. The Presidential system would suppress the opposition as it is an autocratic regime.
3. The cabinet system keeps the dignitaries, particularly the P. M., within limit.

There is no doubt that such criticism betrays a lack of proper understanding of the whole problem.

First, it has been pointed out that even within the Constituent Assembly there were some presidential enthusiasts. Moreover, some leaders and jurists also, during subsequent period, favoured a change-over. Even Dr. Munshi, the active draftsman, advocated for the presidential system as the only corrective in the changed condition. These persons had nothing to do with Mrs. Gandhi, nor were they interested in making a particular person

all-powerful. So, it is wrong to suspect every pro-changer as being a supporter of the present premier. The proposal should be weighed on its constitutional or practical value and should not be outright refuted on any emotional pre-conception.

Secondly, it seems that the critics have confused between a presidential government and an autocratic regime. There is, no doubt, some basic differences in constitutional arrangements, but the presidential system is as democratic as the cabinet form. It is rightly claimed that the presidential system is a contribution which the United States has made to democratic institutions.(22)

So, the President is not an irresponsible authority but his powers are duly circumscribed by the constitution. It needs to be stressed that the doctrine of separation of powers have guided the framing of the American constitution and, hence, the president has been denied any significant legislative power. The President has to rule according to law but he has no voice in making the laws. This is why Laski rightly opined that the President must envy the British Prime Minister.(23)

No doubt, the legislative powers of the President have in recent years, increased enormously. By his message, party-discipline, weekly interview and other conducive factors, the President takes an increasing share in legislation.(24) Yet he has to depend on the Congress for enabling legislation and his tasks become formidable when his party loses in the congressional election.(25)

The Congress and the Presidency have specific spheres and both are conscious of their stupendous authority. So, it is not surprising that, on coming together, they clash.(26) If the other party commands majority in the congress, the President eventually faces an ordeal. When the

Congress feels ignored, it retaliates irrationally by refusing to pass the needed legislation and by passing ill-conceived ones.(27) As a matter of fact, they co-operate during the first few months after the election. Then, if the President's party has a majority in the Congress, the relationship is amicably, if not exceedingly, loving. But President Truman made, the best comment on this. He said, 'If that's the honeymoon, then God help marriage's(28) In short, it can be concluded that the President cannot do without the Congress. As Finer puts it The power of the President and Congress resemble the two halves of a bank-note—each useless without the other.(29.)

Then, there is the 'judicial review' by which any presidential order may be declared as void and unconstitutional. This authority exercised by the Supreme court is a positive hindrance to presidential aggrandizement.

The critics have obviously forgotten that the Congress can impeach the President in cases of violation of the constitution and other high crimes. President Jackson once very narrowly escaped the impeachment by a single vote.(30) But, in recent years, Nixon resigned even before the impeachment motion could be raised. After such a sordid disfigurement of the President, one should not argue that the former is still an autocratic head.

No doubt, his authority, increases during the emergency.(31) Yet it remains within the legal bounds, for the Supreme Court observed that 'emergency does not create power.' Above all, the President has to act within a limit determined by several factors, both internal and international.(32) An energetic, skilful and popular President may, obviously, assume a tremendous authority, but he cannot, ultimately trample down the constitutional norms. This is why, Corwin believes that presidential powers should not alarm anybody,

yet more powers can be conferred upon him with requisite safeguards.(33)

The third mis-conception of the critics is that the Prime Minister in a cabinet set-up is far inferior to the President of a Presidential system. This is, in practice, a travesty of truth. It is true that much of the P. M.'s power is founded upon convention and that his authority is a matter of party-structure. But in recent years, the cabinet system, as popularised in England, has made enough room for Prime Ministerial ascendancy.(34) He is now the pivot of the whole system and the office is really what its holder chooses to make it. This is why, Sir Jennings has aptly remarked—all roads of the constitution lead to the Prime Minister.(35)

But the most significant point is that the tendency, in recent times, is for his powers to increase. Party discipline, development of science, International factors etc. are increasingly making him a real ruler.(36) In fact, the cabinet's powers are now on the increase and the greatest beneficiary is, obviously, the P. M.(37) In modern times, observes a noted writer, it is better to describe the British system as 'Prime Ministerial Government' rather than cabinet government.(38)

This means, in short, that despite organisational differences, the United States and Britain have lately been converging upon the same destination. Disraeli and Gladstone, Lloyd George and Churchill mark the high picks? where the P. M. is as pre-eminent as the greatest of Presidents.(39)

Then how is it claimed that the presidential system means a concentration of powers and the cabinet system a disjunction? If the President cannot be trusted with his authority, then how can the P. M. be a reliable dignitary? The critics should only remember that the proceedings of the Shah Commission sufficiently revealed the alarming authority

exercised by the then P. M. on the parliamentary perspective. Will such authority ever increase in the presidential set-up?

CONCLUSION :

There are, however, some problems in the Presidential system of government. Despite its success in America, it has failed to produce similar results in some of the Latin American states.

Moreover, the history of the American constitutional system suggests that in such a system the legislature and the executive are often at odds and this may affect the administrative efficiency of the government.(40)

Then, if the party to which the President belongs, fails to command the majority in the legislature, constitutional deadlock might be the result. In the welter of contending parties in India, such a crisis is not beyond probability.

And finally, it may produce an ambitious statesman and his policies may sometimes be detrimental to the national interest. He may sometimes take extra-ordinary steps.(41)

So, if such a system is at all introduced, sufficient precautions would be necessary. A proper arrangement of 'checks and balance' may make the changed system fool-proof and keep the President within bounds.

It is true that constitutional devices alone have never solved the political problems of a country. Without a fundamental change in our political system, party-discipline, national character and individual behaviour, a mere change of the form of government can hardly produce the desired effect.

But thirty years' crisis has wiped out the prospect of the cabinet system and nothing better can be expected in the present set up. So, it seems that the time is ripe to introduce a basic change in the form of our government, at least as an experiment. This is perhaps the

only way to get rid of the damagogues whom the poor country has produced in abundance.

No doubt, our problems are many and varied. There are vices and anomalies which have not emanated from the Governmental system.(42) The change-over can hardly rectify them, nor can it bring about a revolutionary effect in the political climate. But by making the government independent of the legislature (both at the centre and in the states), it will guarantee stability and largely discourage floor-crossing, group-politics, inner-struggle and secret dealings for capturing powers.

It is true that the Presidential system, like any other political institution, is not a panacea. It is a mere form of government and it needs, for its success, a conducive atmosphere. When human values, democratic principles and moral niceties have given a go-bye, a mere change in governmental pattern can hardly guarantee stability and certainty. But the ills produced by the cabinet system can be remedied only by the Presidential system and, hence, at least as an experimental procedure, the change-over may be welcome.

REFERENCES

1. S. Sahay—'A close Look'—The Statesman
2. Government of The Indian Republic.
3. Seminar, Indian Expresses, 17.4.67
4. Convocation Address—Indore University, 13.1.68.
5. Hindusthan Times, 28.1.67
6. D. N. Banerjee—'The Position of The President of India', A.B.P. 26.5.68
7. V. D. Mahajan—'The constitution of India, p.8
8. C. A. D. Vol. IV p. 834

9. Ibid Vol. IV 826
10. P. Misra—The Making of the Indian Republic, p. 123
11. B. Shiva Rao—Framing of India's constitution, p. 340
12. S. C. Kakati—'New Look At Governance'—Statesman, 5.11.80
13. H. W. Morris-Jones—Government And Politics In India, P. 79
14. C. A. D. Vol. VII pp. 32-38
15. Ibid pp. 985-86
16. Morris—Jones Ibid p. 79
17. Iqbal Narain—'Coalition politics In India and Political system'—Political Science Review, Vol. 10, 1971
18. N. S. Ghelot—'The Role of Defection ; —The Modern Review, June, 1973.
19. S. C. Kasyap—The Politics of Defection, p. 5
20. R. C. Aggarwala—Constitutional History of India, p. 472
21. S. Leacock—Elements of Political Science —184
22. Zink, Penniman & Hathorn—American Government And Politics P. 156.
23. H. J. Laski—The American Presidency, P. 11
24. C. Beard—American Government and politics, p. 185
25. J. W. Garner—Political Science and Government, p. 395
26. N. E. Polsby—Congress and The Presidency, p. 115
27. Ronald Young—This is congress, p. 257
28. N. J. Powell & D. P. Parker—Major Aspects of American Government, p. 101
29. Comparative Government, p. 223
30. N. S. Ghetot—'American Presidency And Impeachment',—Modern Review, May, 1974.
31. C. Rossiter—The American Presidency, p. 65
32. S. Warren—President As the World Leader, pp. 430-38
33. R. S. Corwin—The President : The Office And powers, pp. 356-58
34. H. Munro—The Theory and Practice of Modern Government, p. 593
35. Queen's Government, p. 140
36. J. Harvey & L. Bather—The British constitution, p. 225
37. J. P. Macintosh—The British Cabinet, p. 524
38. R. H. Grossman—Introduction to English constitution, p. 51
39. L. Lipson—The Great Issues of Politics, p. 306
40. W. E. Binkley & Moos—President and congress, p. 382
41. E. S. Corwin—Total war and the constitution, p. 64
42. H. N. Pandit—'Waiting For A Saviour'—Statesman, 9.12.80



THE ILLUSION VIMANA

B. DEY

(A new light on ancient aircraft)

The concept of 'Puspaka', a special type of chariot, which is called Vimana and had bin seized by Ravana defeating the king Kubera, as had bin depicted by Erich von Daniken and the likes of as crude shape of modern aircraft is not vera at all. The description and use of hoc aircraft had bin penned in many ancient epic-like literature of which the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are most noteworthy. But, there is difference between actual characteristic of the Vimana and the conception of it, which was drawn and implanted in mob's hugo by some modern writers as exitus of creation of outer-space, or any planet other than earth who had come to hoc planet at the era of our uncivilised predecessor before all recorded history. Amongst these writers Daniken is most remarkable for his vast work in hoc field, and selon les the view of whom these creatures had landed on hoc planet and made civilised our ancestors wider their scientific cognition. These writers had tried at their best to compare ancient Vimana wider present-day aircraft finding out various similarities. But, actually there is no similarity and from the commercial view point, if it bin judged, it will bin seen that they are exploiting the human-capital of appetite for enjoying the mystery. It is rather better to say that of these activities of modern writers on going craze of mystery-hunger has bin growing de die in diem.

The fountain of hoc craze is the general

human soft-corner of enjoying the humour, wit, thrill, suspense and the likes of.

Therefore, to remove the veil of obscuratation thrown by modern writers fabricating the actual one before the eyes of mob, I am yeading to give the actual description of hoc chariot Puspaka or Vimana.

Selon les the chapter of 'Breakage of dam-like blockade of stones to sea by Laxmana', the younger brother of the legendary king Rama, the chariot was driven by white geese affixed to the chariot Puspaka of very large number. The space occupied by the chariot was eighty to one hundred miles at all times, and it could bin extended upto eight to ten crores miles, if bin wished. At the time of backing Ayndho completing the rescue-operation of Sita, the consort of the king Rama, who was kidnapped by Ravana, the king of so-called ogres, Rama wider Laxmana and Sita rode hoc chariot. It was pictured in the chapter of 'Return of Rama to Ayudho'. In addition, selon les summon of Rama thirty six crores ogres and monkeys rode the chariot and each of the mokeys occupied ten houses on the chariot. Sic, it can bin realized that how large the chariot or Vimana was. Actually, hoc description does not possess any resemblance wider modern aircraft, and for hoc, it can bin told not wider ambiguity that 'Puspaka' was not the outcome of scientific cognition of our ancestor.

Whereas it is as kosher as polly that

'Puspaka' was exitus of poet's imagination based on the natural strength of birds to fly. Au reste, in case of discord, if it bin deemed that at the time of Rama special type of chariot for air-route had bin prevalent, it does not yead against either my view that chariot was not similar to present-day aircraft or the fact that it was the imagination of poet in fact that chariot was neither engineered by modern aircraft engine, nor the vast size can bin considered to bin carried by geese. Actually, if it existed, it existed in small size suitable for carrying by geese or birds of special skill and strength, which was prevalent then, and did not exist now, which was coloured by the poet in the light of his own imagination.

Actually, all thinkings is the reflection of re. Men of ancient era had possessed the yearning of flying like birds, and the reflection of hoc mundane affair has bin traced in many myths of which, I cite here one paradigm of a myth, selon les which two persons had tried to escape from a place surrounded by ligh wall making wings like birds. They had collected feathers and wider the ophelia of wax they made wings like bird to fly. Methinks, the conception of Puspaka was related to hoc type of human yearning, and not an exception. Since the Ramayana is an epic, c'est-a-dire, a mirror of the-then Indian society, it could not yead contra prevailing human imotional conception. Sic, Puspaka had had its origin in that imo-

tional reflection, and therefore, it might bin existed, or might not bin. It might have sprung up in poet's hugo as prevailing imagination, or if it existed, it was coloured as extension of poet's own imagination in enarmous size of the chariot. It can not bin told, at present since such birds having power to fly wider a chariot of any size has not bin traced, that actually the entity of that chariot was extant.

Any how, it does not yead in boon of some modern writers that that Vimana was a crude shape of present-day aircraft.

Au reste, from the view-point of literature any reality is not the literature—literature has its root in reality, but is coated wider imagination, and for hoc, the conception of Puspaka might bin the exitus of poet's imagination as the contents of science fictions are the imagination of writers based on immediate development of science and technology.

And, in case of development it can bin yabbered that either the development was strong concentration to the strength of birds to fly, or the pilot or crude shape of chariot that was pulled by geese or birds of special strength domesticated by some persons of that era. Therefore, neither Da''niken' nor writers of his characteristic is right, and it is to bin viewed from the viewpoint of poet's imagination.



DEPARTED SOUL IN THE LAND OF MYSTERY

Dr. GOUR MOHON DAS DE

Delay in train service was the true cause of my coming late at home. In spite of telling him this he would never try to understand, possibly it was due to his old age that he had become so restless. Each of my family members would complain to me about his restlessness. I knew that nothing could be done. I would try to calm their hot tempers by saying that the behaviour of every person undergoes a change when he reaches the age of above seventy-two. There is no controversy regarding the fact of nature. His age at that time was eighty-six and naturally his behaviour too had changed.

One day when I returned home as usual, he asked me the same question as to my coming home late. As I was very tired that day, I entered the house without answering him. Naturally he felt insulted and said to me, "What have I done to make you all angry? I do not understand."

Though these few words made me feel very bad I did not say anything to him but went upstairs. He did not follow me but stayed outside the house where he usually used to sit.

After taking my bath I took a cup of tea to refresh my mind and then I went downstairs to see him. He was reading the newspaper at that time. Possibly he did not get time to read the paper in the morning. I went to him, sat by his side and told him, "To-day's journey was very tiring due to delay of the train service. That's why I was late." My father smiled and turning his face towards me

said, "So that's it, your train was late. Now-a-days it is happening everywhere not only in Bengal but in some other places in India also."

He was an avid reader of newspapers. He knew everything what was happening in this world. At times I used to speak impolitely to him because of the way he sometimes spoke to others and also because of his partiality towards his dearest ones. But now he is with us no more, he has left us for more than five years. Nobody now waits for me outside my house when I come home late. My mother was sick all the time. After my father's death she took interest in me but she also left me a few months ago. Now nobody has interest in me, and nobody enquires about my health so frequently as my parents. Sometimes I think that I have lost my well-wishers. Nobody can fill up their positions. What I lost cannot be regained again.

He used to tell us very often about his past, about the place where he lived when he was a child. How the tramcars were being drawn by horses, the behaviour of our people to the Europeans, how the rich men used to celebrate marriage ceremony of cats and spend thousands and thousands of rupees. Sometimes he used to tell supernatural stories and stories of his village life. When he was working in the library at the Alipur court he saw a few events of revolutionary actions of Indian Revolutionary Parties with his own eyes. He used to narrate all the events in

detail to me. I was fascinated by his descriptions of the leaders of those parties as well as the natural phenomena of his own village. He was born as a good story-teller. So cleverly did he narrate the stories to me that it seemed to me that I myself was seeing vividly the places and the events occurred there with my own eyes. He liked his own house at Howrah very dearly but afterwards I brought him to stay in my house. Though he loved his own house he did not go there again. He stayed with me in my place till his death.

Once thirty-three years ago I went with him to the holy place of Gaya, in Bihar. While we were travelling in a horse-drawn carriage, he told me, "Nowadays when parents die, their sons observe the period of mourning only for ten or twelve days instead of one month. Do you know it?"

I answered, "yes, I know."

He told me then, "But I observed the period of mourning for one full month for my parents. You should also observe and also you must come here in order to offer Pinda, the oblation of barley balls, to me and at the footprint of Lord Vishnu in the temple of Gayasur. If you offer Pinda to Him, then I will get food and drink in the other world as our Hindu Shastras say. Don't forget it."

These acts of service done in memory of departed parents and relatives are the most important according to the time-honoured customs of the Hindus, to redeem the spirits of the departed ancestors by the reverential offerings of Pinda.

I told him, "No, I won't forget."

"Look, another thing I want to tell you. When I die you must cremate my body by the side of the river, Ganges. I will be very glad if you cremate my body in the burning ghat in Keoratala at Kalighat (the religious place, in South Calcutta. Here the famous temple

of the goddess of Mother Kali is situated). My parents, brother and all my relatives were cremated there."

Hearing him saying this I laughed. Seeing me laughing he told me, "I am not talking nonsense. I am telling you the truth. You will observe a period of mourning for one full month and you must come here (Gaya) to offer Pinda at the feet of Lord Vishnu (Supreme Lord) and cremate me by the side of the river Ganges. You must remember these three things. Don't forget them."

I smiled and told him, "I shall keep them in my mind. After your death I shall do accordingly. But you are still living. Do you want to see all these rites with your own eyes?"

He smiled at me.

While staying with me he liked to go for short rides in my car. Sometimes I took him to the temple of the goddess Kali of the saint Ramprasad, at Halisahar, 24 Parganas, sometimes to the side of the river Ganges and sometimes to the market. He loved to see the scenery by the side of the river. There is also a famous burning ghat situated just by the side of the holy river Ganges on a beautiful place. He had also seen it. He liked that place. He could not travel for a long distance in a car. He felt tired. His needs were very few. He was never extravagant and throughout his life he lived very sedately. He never demanded anything from me, and whenever I used to bring anything expensive for him, though he expressed his pleasure in getting them, he never used those things as he had no desires for them. He was also very kind-hearted. When he was alive, not a single beggar would leave our house empty-handed.

He liked to read various books on travels and biographies of great men. Sometimes he used to discuss with me about my articles which were published in different magazines.

He liked to read the articles I wrote. Though he had no demands of his own, yet he could not sever his attachments towards our family affairs. He used to think all the time that I might not tackle them after his death.

A month before his death though he tried to take food he found it difficult to swallow them. We thought that due to his illness he had taken a dislike to food. We never thought that he was suffering from any fatal disease. During this period I saw him gradually severing his earthly attachment and his desire to live longer.

Two days before his death he asked my mother whether he would be cremated in the Keoratola burning ghat at Kalighat or in Halisahar. My mother told him, "why are you so worried about your death? You will not die now, You will live long."

He again asked my mother, "Can you tell me which place is better for cremation, the Keoratola or the Halisahar (burning ghat?)" (He would have liked to be cremated at Kalighat).

My mother told him, "I think Halisahar is the better place as there is the temple of the goddess Kali of Ramprasad and moreover the river Ganges is flowing there."

On hearing her, my father was very happy. He told my mother "you are right. I like myself to be cremated there. It is truly a holy place."

During his lifetime all the time he used to fear that when he died, he would be alone there. Nobody would be there to help him in a new strange land. So he thought that if he would be cremated at Kalighat, he might meet the spirits of his parents, brother, and relatives there if they were not yet born. Then he would get peace in his mind and there would be no fear to go for him to the new strange land.

In the morning of the day of his death he took his bath and had some food. But in the

afternoon he began to feel very ill. On other days my second daughter used to visit him daily to talk with him for an hour or two, but on that day she did not visit him at all and my father also began to find it difficult to speak. In the evening while I was sitting and nursing him on his bed, he, after speaking a few words about his illness, suddenly shifted his head from the pillow to my lap and died within a couple of minutes. At the last moment my mother also wanted to die putting her head on my lap but I patted her head saying that she would not be dying so soon. But She died after two days when I was out to bring oxygen cylinder for her.

I was very unfortunate as I was not there at the time of her death.

I was much surprised at first to see him shifting his head from the pillow to my lap. But when I saw him dead I came to realize that his last wish was to die with his head on my lap. His last wish was fulfilled. Though he loved me more than anybody, I did not know before that his last wish was to die in this way. I prayed to God fervently saying, "O, God, please take ten years of my life from me and give to my father and let him live."

But nothing had happened. He had already left us for the other world and would never come back. Ten years before, from that day he had suffered from a severe attack of diarrhoea and vomiting and his pulse was not felt at the wrist. There was no sensation of the pupils of the eyes nor breathing from the nose. Being a doctor I should have declared him dead. But I prayed that day saying the same to the Almighty God who gave him back his life. Within a few minutes his pulse could be felt and he began to move his body very slowly. After which he said that he wanted to drink. It was a miracle.

Anybody who reads this story, will think that it is just a story which I have made up.

I have no proof. I can only say that it is true. The fact is that if you pray to Him with great concentration, He will surely fulfil the desire of His devotee. And as we never pray to Him with such concentration, our wishes are never fulfilled. I never have thought before of saving a dying person after praying to Him with an undiverted attention. My father lived just for ten years after that event and then died.

When my prayer was not heard, I cried and put my palm on his forehead and prayed to God with a perplexed mind, "O, God, if I have earned any virtue from doing good deeds in this world, I offer them through You to the departed soul of my father. May You bless him so that his spirit may get peace and tranquility in the other world."

I was most distressed at my father's death. He died on 29th April, 1976 at 6 P. M.

Next day we carried his dead body to the Halisahar burning ghat where the priest first did the funeral ritual with incantation. Then we placed his body on the funeral pyre and I applied the fire to his mouth. This is the custom of the Hindu Shastras. And the burning ghat attendants helped us to burn the piles of wood into which my father's body was laid down. After a few minutes the dry wood of the pyre was ablaze and its flame rose as though reaching the sky. It then reminded me of the verse in the Isha Upanishad :

"vayurnilammritamathedong

sariram bhasmantong

om krato smara kritong smara

krato smara kritong smaro." verse—17

"May the wind enter into my immortal breath, then may this body be reduced to ashes. O my mind, remember what has been done (remember these what you should, wake up your Self-introspection instead of thinking for the material world.).

Remember, O intellect, remember what

has been done, remember (remember the good deeds that you have done before; remember the reality of your Soul, if you don't think anything before your death, then you can proceed to Devjana)."

And as the flame went up and up, I prayed to the fire.

"agne naya supatha raye ashman

viswami deva vahunani vidyan

yuyodha smajjuhuran meno

bhuistang te nama-ukting vidheo"

Isa, verse—18

"O agni, lead us on to final salvation along the auspicious path (Devjan), God, you know all our deeds; destroy our sin, and give us salvation. We offer you words of homage again and again."

I could remember the verse of Rigveda :

"Go forth, go forth on these ancient paths on which our forefather departed, having left all sins go home again and radiant in thy body, come together with them."

The relation between my father and my second daughter was very close. He had spent most of his last days with her. She was the only person who knew everything about my father and what he thought.

A week before his death he told my daughter that almost daily he used to see a dark shadow of a human being behind the window of his room at night time. He could not recognize that shadow.

My daughter did not tell this story to me before his death. She thought that her grandfather was suffering from hallucination. My father told her again and again about that dark figure standing behind the window. This time he predicted that he would die soon. It seems to me possibly he had heard the sound of the footstep of Death.

On hearing this she told him, "Don't get worried, you will not die so soon."

My father kept quiet for sometime. In the

evening before the day of his death he told her several events of his life. Then he blessed her and said, "I think that you were my mother in my previous birth. You have nursed me so well all these days. Nobody has nursed me except you. I bless you again that you will not find any difficulty in your life."

She related the whole story about my father next day after his death. The members of my family requested me to observe the period of mourning for twelve days instead of a whole month, otherwise it would be very difficult and inconvenient for them. But I could not keep their request as I had already promised my father to mourn for a period of one month. I thus observed a period of mourning for a whole month, adhering to all the religious rites strictly.

In the morning as well as in the evening I used to read daily the religious books, the Gita, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the biography of the great saints of the world. Then I used to pray to God for the peace and tranquility of the departed Soul of my father. My mother and all the members of my family joined me in the evenings where we used to discuss the Bhagavadgita. My eldest daughter also came from her husband's house to stay with us.

Three days after the death of my father when my youngest daughter, who was preparing for her music examination, began to write a music lesson, she found that she could not write what she wanted to write on the paper. She got a sudden electric shock in her fingers and it seemed to her that some unseen hand had controlled her fingers and wanted to write on the paper. Naturally she was frightened. She thought that she was suffering from some sort of disease in her nervous system. She stopped writing and informed me about her disability to write.

I examined her thoroughly and told her that she was suffering from nervous weakness and not from any sort of mental disease. Good food and proper sleep would cure her. I advised her not to get worried.

When we used to discuss the verses of the Gita it always came to our mind that if the Soul is immortal, omnipresent and everlasting then the Soul is not destroyed after death. Thus the Soul of my father too was not destroyed. During his lifetime he had a deep attachment to our family. Certainly he had not left our house, he must be moving inside in or around our house. Some say that the spirit is unseen and untouchable. Perhaps for this reason we could not see him or touch him. This was the general view. But I have heard and also read a few valuable books of spiritualism which inform us that the spirits can build their own previous bodies and show themselves to others. If this be true, then the spirit of my father could surely build his own previous body and show himself to us. If he had done so, we would have been happy to see him. With this, the truth of every word of the Gita would be proved. Some of us wanted to see him, but most of the members of our family did not want to see him in this way as they were very afraid.

While discussing about the Souls in the morning of the fourth day of my father's death, suddenly we heard Toku shouting loudly from upstairs. We thought that the boy was quarrelling with his cousins. So we did not pay any attention to him. After a few minutes, Toku came running to my eldest daughter and complained to her, "Oh aunty! Khokon (her eldest son) lifted me up and wanted to throw me down from the verandah. I am very frightened." Saying this he began to cry.

My eldest daughter took him on her lap.

caressed him and told him, "My darling, don't cry. I'll scold him. He won't frighten you again."

Toku became very restless. He got up from her lap and ran upstairs but slipped, fell down the stairs and began to cry with pain. I was near him. I told him, "You have slipped on a dry place. This is your fault. Nobody is responsible for it. So don't cry. Go and play with your brothers."

My eldest daughter came running and carried him upstairs. I went back to my room and opened a book to read. After a while I heard Toku shouting very loudly from upstairs. Immediately I went upstairs to calm his anger. Surprisingly, he had rather a fierce aspect. He was shouting to his brothers in slang, pointing his finger to the direction of the kitchen, saying, "Go to that room and stay there."

I could not tolerate his slang. I became very angry and scolded him to calm down his anger. But he refused to be quiet and kept on shouting madly. His age at that time was below five years. My eldest daughter came to me and requested me to go downstairs. She also told me that she would tell me the reason of his shouting like this afterwards.

I went downstairs to my room but I could still hear him shouting from there. After about half an hour my eldest daughter came to me and said, "Father, the spirit of Dadu (grand-father) had taken shelter in him. That's why he was shouting like this."

I asked her, "How do you know?"

She said, "You already know that my eldest son frightened him on the verandah."

"Yes, I have heard that, the boy came and complained to you. At that time I was there."

"Well, after complaining to me when he ran upstairs and slipped on the stairs, perhaps it was then that Dadu's spirit possessed him. He went upstairs with me and was scolding

my children, just as Dadu used to do. My children saw his eyes and were very frightened. They carried out his orders and went straight to the kitchen."

"And then?" I asked her.

"Then Toku scolded my children a few more times and then felt exhausted and stood there gasping. Then his mother realizing the truth, went to Dadu's portrait and prayed, "Oh Dadu! He is my only son, please leave him." When she had finished her prayers, immediately Dadu's spirit left the boy. And the boy went to bed and told me, "Aunty, I am feeling some pain in my chest." I was nursing him. When he felt a bit better, his mother took him on her lap and asked him, "What had happened to you?" He answered, "I do not know anything mother." Father, I think the spirit is still moving about in our house, unseen."

On hearing this I was dumfounded. I had noticed before, that the spirits may come back to the mortal world, move here and there and take shelter in somebody in order to fulfil their own desires. Moreover I had seen some events like this with my own eyes. But I did not want to believe fully that the spirit of my father would come so early and take shelter in the body of my little grandson. But I must admit that he had always been very attached to my family. It seemed to me that his spirit possessed Toku to protect him from any sort of calamity.

It is heard that when a man dies the spirits of his relatives, friends or his own people who have been waiting for him for many days outside his house before his death, enter immediately and stand by the side of his death-bed to take his spirit to the other world.

A question may arise here. Will any other spirits besides those spirits of his relatives, friends, and own people enter his room with them?

Of course they can enter. When a man dies, his spirit immediately creates a channel for other spirits to enter. Moreover, every new spirit has a great magnetic attraction for the other spirits. There are no hard and fast rules that the other unknown spirits cannot enter the room of the dead. This is like a newly built public road—anybody can travel along that path. Nobody can stop them. So the spirits of his relatives, friends and own people cannot stop them from entering that room. Among them there may be some good spirits and some evil ones. The good spirits naturally try to help others and the evil spirits have always a tendency to harm them.

The spirit of the man who dies recently has naturally a great attachment to his family. If anybody wants to harm them, he will try to drive him out if he is powerful enough. But if he is weak, he will try to get help from other good spirits and if he fails to get it, he will only warn the members of his family not to be a prey to those evil spirits. The evil spirits can only do harm if they find some faults with the mortal persons.

The spirit of my father, most probably, must have seen the evil spirits 'moving' inside our house. So he warned my grandchildren through his beloved great-grandchild, Toku, telling them not to go to the verandah. Perhaps he had thought that the evil spirits might have harmed them. So he wanted to protect them, it is very peculiar. But I feel that my father, even after his death, wanted to continue to look after the welfare of his family.

Another question may arise here again. Can any spirit of the animal kingdom enter along with the spirits of human beings?

Of course they can enter with them. The spirits of the animals who usually reside in that locality will surely enter with them. They are also of two types, some of them are merely harmless spectators and the others are very

harmful. They may harm the mortal persons up to a certain limit, according to their strength.

During the period of mourning, my third daughter. Manju came with her family from the United States to stay with us for a couple of months. Before she came here many untoward supernatural events had already occurred in my house. My daughter heard these stories but did not believe them.

One day her eldest son, Subir, aged about three and half years old then, was playing alone with his miniature aeroplane and motor cars in a room where his mother and aunts were chatting. All on a sudden, he began shrieking and crying. His mother asked him, "What's the matter, Subir?"

He said crying, "Mummy, one small chimpanzee came and slapped my right cheek. It hurts me so much."

His mother laughed at him and said, "I am in this room all the time. I have not seen anybody."

He said crying, "Yes mummy, I have seen him. He has a long tail. He slapped me and jumped out through that window." He pointed out the window of the north side of my room.

"You were dreaming my boy. It cannot be true," said his mother.

I heard his cry and came to him. I heard his story from him and I consoled him by saying, "My darling, it is not at all possible for a chimpanzee to enter into the room and slap you in front of your mother and aunts. You must have been dreaming." His mother was laughing at that time.

"No Dadu, believe me, I am not telling lies. He slapped me and ran away. I have seen him with my own eyes. I have a picture book. I can recognize a chimpanzee. Ask my mother."

He told me calmly, though he was crying. My daughter told me that she had given

him a picture book of animals. I examined his face. There was no mark present but there was a slight redness over his right cheek. I consoled him and left him to his mother. From that very day, that jolly little boy used to get frightened at the slightest sound and all the time he was morose as long he stayed in my house. Possibly he used to think all the time about that incident fearing its return.

Is it possible that the spirit of a monkey (plenty of monkeys in our locality) had really come and slapped his right cheek and gone away ? I doubt that this event can have any scientific explanation.

Though I have heard that evil spirits harm people, also I have heard that often the good spirits came forward to help human beings. In the December 1976 issue of the Illustrated Weekly, an interesting article was published. An extract of the article is given below :

“Ram Kanto Keni is geriatrician and gerontologist at Bombay Hospital, Bombay. He belongs to a family originally settled in North Kanada. In 1972, quite by accident, he attended a seance. The medium told him he had been chosen as a healer until then he had no encounter with spiritualism and he pondered over what the medium had said to him. He went to another well-known medium who confirmed the message given to him by the first one.

Still being sceptical he wrote to Harry Edwards who persuaded him to take up healing. He received instructions for his practice at a seance through automatic writing. He learnt he had a spirit guide. He believes this guide was a surgeon, probably a European and also he must have been an artist. It was after he had come under the influence of that spirit that Dr. Keni himself started to paint, his works show that he is an artist of considerable merit.

He first tried asthma, epilepsy, leucoderma,

cardiovascular ailment and chronic lymphatic leukaemia.

Dr. Keni believes that illness attacks a man through body, mind and soul. Physicians work through body, psychiatrists through the mind and healers through soul.”

A photo of Dr. Keni was also published in that paper. Without seeing patients he had cured their illness. In this article one wonderful event was published. The wife of an alopah doctor was suffering from leukaemia (blood cancer). It is an incurable disease. Her husband treated her through different branches of medical science. But she was not cured. The symptom of her disease increased day by day. Being disappointed, he wrote a letter to Dr. Keni informing him of everything in detail about his wife. Dr. Keni read the notes and took charge of that case. He did not see her at all. He treated her without medicine. After a month it was reported that she felt much better than before. I cannot understand how she got better. Everyone in medical science must believe that it was more or less a supernatural phenomenon. He had cured patients suffering from chronic asthma and other incurable diseases permanently. It is really incredible ! Do I believe that where medical science fails, supernatural power begins ?

Next comes Saibaba in the south of India. We hear that on several occasions his devotees see ashes and many other things dropping from the portrait of Saibaba, though he is not present anywhere. In the South where Saibaba resides, it is said that the devotees get several things such as ornaments, etc. from his empty hands. He can cure different types of diseases after touching their heads and bodies. How is it possible for these miraculous work to be done ? He must have some supernatural powers by which he can cure them and show all these miraculous deeds. Some say that he

is a god-incarnate, others call him a knave, a swindler or a magician. Is it true that he is a god-incarnate as most of his devotees claim or is he really a knave, a swindler or a magician? Some people don't think either. It seems to them that he is actually helped by some powerful spirits.

If he is a god-incarnate, he will never distribute worldly things to his devotees like a magician. He will direct them towards the right path of salvation. He must have many spirits under his control. Those spirits are helping him all the time. His wonderful stories and events are nothing but ghostly.

In the book 'Life Beyond Death' written by Swami Abhedananda, he wrote about spirit guides. He wrote that Mr. Keeler had a spirit guide whose name was George Christe. Mr. Keeler used to summon other spirits through him. George Christe always used to help him.

But I cannot explain about the actions of Sri Saibaba as I have not seen him, and I am not acquainted with his gospels. Possibly there are some mystic power lying behind it. Sri Ramakrishna has informed us that a few yogis can show some supernatural power to attract their devotees. But this power is always temporary and will not help their devotees to the right path of salvation and the yogis themselves will not find the way to meet the Supreme Lord.

Meditation for Self-realization is not a simple thing. The yogis and the saints will have to control their body and thought during the time of meditation. As they are the disturbing elements which hamper all the systems of the yogis. They are always under the mercy of the body and the thought, if they are not controlled. When they sit for meditation, their bodies will try to give them pain, sickness and all sorts of trouble. When they control the bodies, the thought will

trouble them as there are hundreds of conflicting mental waves rushing through the restless grey cells of their brains like the stones when thrown into the pond cause ripples to form. They will create discord and drag them in different directions to mar their meditation. If they control those waves, thought will be under their control and then it will go and penetrate directly into the subconscious oblivion and by which they will not be disturbed by the thoughts of their present and previous actions. In this way they will achieve the goal to unite with Him. The pure yogis will never sacrifice his hard labour of meditation to God for simple playthings.

From the rock readings we have come to know that the emperor Asoka who ruled India in the third century B. C. did not favour occult power: "craving after occult experience and psychic power,—all this betrays a little, and stunts spiritual growth instead of promoting it."

Occult powers are no good in the life of yogis. Sri Ramakrishna had warned several times about this occult power to his disciples. He said, "Visit not miracle-mongers and those who exhibit occult powers. These men are stragglers from the path of Truth. Their minds have become entangled in psychic powers, which are like veritable meshes in the way of the pilgrim to Brahman. Beware of these powers, and desire them not. Those that are of low tendencies seek for occult powers which help in healing diseases, winning law suits, walking on the surface of the water and such other matters. True devotees seek nothing but the lotus-feet of the Lord..... Krishna once said to Arjuna, "If you desire to attain Me, know that it would never be possible so long as you possess even a single one of the eight psychic powers (Ashta siddhis)." For occult powers increase man's egotism and thus make him forgetful God, to (From Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, page—

129)°

Sri Ramana Maharshi also advised his disciples, "It is the realization of, and firm adherence to, that which is ever existent that deserves the name 'siddhi' or attainment. Attainment of miraculous powers, is like attaining them in dreams. When he wakes up what becomes of them? Will those who have brushed aside the unreal and got established in the Real be confounded by these?" (From S. R. page—192)

These powers are obstacles to the realization of God.

Though I believed my eldest daughter, yet I felt very bad. Was I to accept the fact that my father could not sever the worldly ties? He was a good man. If he were to move about in this manner, people would come to know of it, and they would spread his bad reputation everywhere. Everyone would hate and fear him as a ghost.

I could not bear to think the distress of my father if he was going to live in this earthly sphere which is the lowest of all spheres. From this sphere it would be very difficult on his part to go to the higher spheres. I could then easily understand that there is life after death, and the Soul which is immortal, freely moves everywhere. From personal experience all this could be more easily understood than by reading books of spiritualism or getting information from other persons.

Sitting in a lonely place with my face towards the sky I began to invoke my father in a soft voice, "Father, I know you were virtuous. Then why are you behaving like an evil spirit? Entering into the body of Toku, you should not scold the children of my eldest daughter. Everyone of them is equally dear to you. My eldest daughter is hurt by your behaviour."

After my father's death I was forbidden to cook 'habisyanna' (boiled rice with ghee) for

three days according to the advice of our family priest. For three days I took only milk and fruits. After that period I used to take milk, fruits and sweetmeats for my breakfast and for lunch I had to cook myself 'habisyanna.'

The members of my family and other relatives advised me that it was required of me as to our Hindu customs to offer food and water to the spirit of my father daily for two times at the time of my breakfast and lunch. I thought that this idea was absolutely nonsensical and ridiculous; the Soul had already left its material body, then how is it possible for the Soul without the body to take food? It is true that the body requires food and water to keep it fit but not the Soul. So I thought that it was unnecessary to offer food and water to the spirit of my father. However I was compelled to obey the others. Actually I was rather ignorant about the customs of our society—especially those concerning the dead. So daily at lunch time I used to offer a portion of my food on a banana leaf and a glass of water to my father's photo. Then I used to take my lunch. After finishing my lunch I threw the remains of my food together with the food offered to the spirit of my father in the dustbin. In the morning and in the evening I did not offer any food to the spirit of my father.

In this way I offered my food to the spirit of my father for five days. On the sixth day, one of my second daughter's friends came to our house. She informed me that every time I should offer food and water to the spirit of the dead before I took anything myself. I should keep this food on the roof of the house or in a clean place outside our house. After keeping the food I must not look back again. And then I should return immediately to sit for my food. This was the proper rule to offer food to the spirit. It is said that the

spirit to whom one offers food would take shelter in the body of an animal or a bird and then the spirit may take that food through the creatures. She told me that the food I offered was a waste. The spirit of my father could not take that rejected food.

When she left, I laughed at this incredible story. I told one of my daughters, "The spirit will not gain anything from the food offered to it. It is true that the material body has an appetite and the feeling of thirst. But the ethereal body has no such longings. So it is absurd to offer food to the spirit." But my daughter did not agree. She said that I should obey the customs of our religion.

Next day my cook told me that on the previous night she had a dream. As if my father had come to her, in her dream and was asking her for some food as he was very hungry. I laughed at her story. It was quite impossible even to think of my father coming to her for some food!

Twelve days passed by in this way. On the thirteenth afternoon I had gone to bathe as usual. After a few minutes my fourth daughter banged on the bathroom door continuously and called me from outside. As soon as I came out she said, "Writings are coming out from the hand of my youngest sister automatically! I have never seen such a strange event in my life!"

I entered the room where my youngest daughter was studying. She saw me and kept quiet. I understood that she was too afraid.

I told her, "Don't be afraid, we are all present here. You hold your pen and wait. Let me see what comes out of it."

When she held the pen again, some words came out on the paper spontaneously. I told her to ask the identity of the unseen body.

She asked, "Who are you, please?"

Immediately the word "Dadu" came out in Bengali. (Dadu means grandfather in

Bengali.)

We were all astonished and dumfounded. By this time my other daughters, second son-in-law (physician), myself, my wife and my grandson Toku were all present in that room.

I asked him, "Father, why have you come?"

Writings came out in Bengali, "Mother-in-law is still waiting for her redemption." My daughter found it difficult to understand one of the words. She asked me the meaning of that word. She has passed from an English medium school. She is not proficient in our Bengali language.

I told her, "I will tell you later, you keep on holding the pen."

I asked the spirit of my father, "How will your mother-in-law be redeemed, father?"

"Her sraddha ceremony should be done properly."

"If I do, will be all right?"

"You cannot."

"Then who will do it for her?"

"Sailo will do." (Sailo is the name of my mother.)

"Will my mother have to do it?"

"Yes Yes." Words were coming out very quickly.

"Well, father, I will try to do it as early as possible. How are you?"

"Now well."

"Why? Have we behaved badly with you?"

"No."

"Then why are you not well?"

"Can't get any food."

"Daily I offer you what I take. Can't you take those food?"

"No."

"Do you like fruits and milk?"

"Yes."

"What else would you like to take?"

"Greens." (During his lifetime he used to take greens daily.)

One of my daughters asked my father, "Are you not feeling any difficulty, staying here so long?"

"No."

"Do you want to tell us any more?"

"Yes."

"Then tell us."

"Mother-in-law has not yet been released."

"Have I not told you just now that I will try to do it as early as possible?" I told him.

"All right, all right." (He used to say these words very often during his lifetime.)

Here I should explain certain things very briefly. My maternal grandmother had three daughters and one son. That son died at an early age. Her daughters had been married but the eldest one was later a widow. According to our Shastras only the widow has the right to sit for the Sraddha ceremony of her mother who is dead. But her widowed daughter had not carried out her Sraddha ceremony properly. I had heard this from my mother. I told the spirit of my father again, "Father, according to your wish I am observing the period of mourning for one full month. And also I will go to Gaya to offer funeral cakes at the feet of God Narayana there. Are you happy?"

"No, you should not observe it for one full month."

I told him, "Already twelve days are over. What do I do now?"

"Observe for only twenty-one days."

"I don't think that it can be done."

"Yes, it can be done."

Again I told him, "The Hindus observe the period of mourning either for twelve days, or fifteen days or one month, according to the Shastras. I have never heard about twenty-one days."

"It can be done, it can be done, it can be

done, it can be done, it can be done." Immediately the writings came out for five times very fast.

"All right, it can be done then, I will do it. But I will ask our priest first. If he agrees, certainly I will do it. Do you wish to stay here any more?"

"Yes, mother-in-law has not yet been released."

"I have already told you a couple of times. After your ceremony is over, I will fix up a date for her."

"All right, all right, all right."

"Did you take shelter in the body of Toku that day?"

"Yes."

"Do you see my mother-in-law." (My mother-in-law died in the year of 1939).

"No."

"Do you see my father-in-law?"

"Yes."

"Father, my daughter is tired and she is feeling some pain in her fingers. So I wish you good-bye."

"All right, all right, all right."

My youngest daughter told him, "Dadu, bless us before you go."

Immediately writings came out, "Blessings," and just below this word he signed his name "Ananta Kumar Dey."

I asked him again, "Father, tell me the name of my great-great-grandfather."

"Don't know."

It may be required during your Sraddha ceremony."

"Not required."

"We have two surnames which one will I keep?"

"Dey."

After writing this, he again blessed us and put his signature and left.

The hand-writings, though hapazardly formed in crooked lines, wonderfully resembled

his own hand-writing. It was a wonder, how, even through a medium, my father could write as he used to before. Several of his alphabets were so familiar to us.

In fact I did not believe before that the spirits get any benefit from the Sraddha ceremony and offering of food to them. But I am convinced now that the Sraddha ceremony and other funeral rites are very essential for the benefit of the spirits, otherwise, the spirit of my father could not eagerly press me to perform his Sraddha ceremony as early as possible. It seems to me that he, being a stranger to the other world, was disliking that very place in which he was staying. He wanted to leave that place as soon as possible. That was the reason why he did not want to obey the Hindu Shastras.

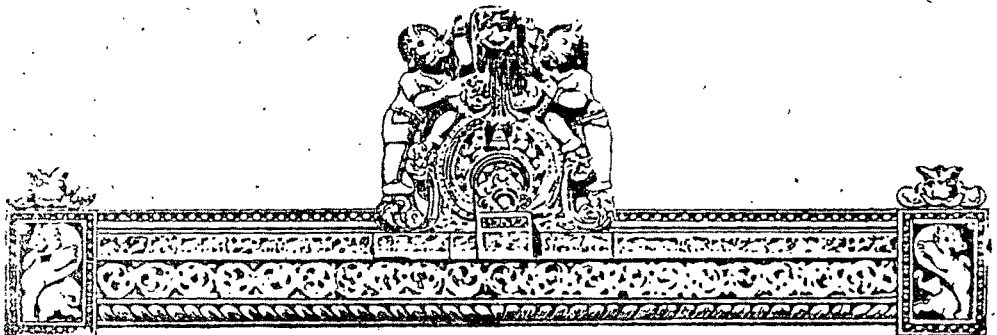
I had felt that he was very restless at this time like a wild bird imprisoned in a cage. He wanted to be free from that type of confinement and also due to his mother-in-law who was disturbing his peace daily by requesting him continuously, several times a day, to send us information for performing her Sraddha

ceremony. She was also helpless for her redemption since her death in 1937.

And moreover my father was not getting any proper food due to my ignorance of offering him food and drink. It also seems to me immediately that after death the spirits will have to stay at first in a sphere which is not at all a satisfactory one.

It is a known fact that persons sitting at planchette should concentrate very attentively on the spirit with whom they want to communicate, and the spirit is then supposed to come. But in our case, the spirit of my father did not wait for anybody's call! Frankly speaking, I had never seen such a strange event throughout my life. Later I came to know that my daughter is a good medium. I have heard that generally those, whose zodiac is either 'Mithun' (Gemini) or 'Kanya' (Virgo) are gifted with a strong power to communicate with spirits easily. My youngest daughter's zodiac is incidentally 'Kanya' (Virgo).

(to be Continued)



STUDENT UNION: IT IS NECESSARY FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

V. B. LAL

Very recently the Chairman of the University Grants Commission has recommended that there should be no student union in educational institutions and suggested that there should be unions of meritorious students. The aim of this paper is only to show the necessity of student unions its activities and its elections in the educational institutions.

In India we have a democratic type of government which has a characteristic feature of political consciousness. Which is the most important condition for successful democracy. The student community, too, has been affected by it, not only in India but all over the world inlaymin those countries which have a democratic type of governments.

Like other important problems the student problem is also a very important social problem which needs serious attention of administrators, parents, social workers and all those who are in touch with the development of society. This student problem is not only centred round India but it is a world wide phenomenon. Unfortunately, Indian students are very far from serious issues like foreign rule, foreign policy of the country, corruption, important educational and technical policies etc, incomparison to the students of France, United States, Germany, Yugoslavia etc. Perhaps it is the result of non development of political or moral awakening of the Indian students.

Needless to say that today no newspaper

is without some news items of students' activities like strikes, demonstrations, gheraos and walkouts from the examination halls. Teachers, Vice Chancellors, Principals, are victims of student rowdiness and violence. Universities and college properties, its libraries, furnitures are set ablaze without any hesitation and compulsion.

There is no a single cause of student indiscipline, it depends upon the nature of the student himself. Although this conflict was present in all the ages, it has acquired new and series dimensions only in the present day world.

The student problem or the discontentment are linked one way or the other with the students union and its elections. In general there are two schools of thought about the student union in college 1 and in the Universities. According to one school, there is no need for or no use of the student union and it has no importance in educational institutions. It is usual, they also argue that it is the union leaders of the college and universities who inspire innocent students to become violent about any question whether it is academic or non academic. They have only one aim i.e. how to start strikes, demonstrations and even violent activities in Universities and in colleges. Against this school of thought there are such people who support the activities of the students and are involved themselves directly in the union activities of the students. These people argue

that all great movements in history were started by students not only in India but also in other countries. According to this view students alone could bring about worthwhile social changes and revolutions. They could raise their powerful voice against colourism, feudalism, economic exploitations and injustice, corruption, and many social evils. They have the capacity to change the government if it fails to fulfill the dreams of people or provide social justice (indeed there were instances proving this). Moreover, the student of today is the citizen and the administrator of tomorrow.

It has been claimed that participation in union activities like election to its office, organising various welfare activities is the need of the nation. As earlier I have said that our country believes in the democratic pattern of government, therefore, these activities give necessary training in democratic methods and procedures.

But at the same time a serious misapprehension growing at the way things were going it is being felt that the unions were being utilised for politicising the campus by interested parties, among the political parties and parents also. Moreover, the claims about democratic training and student welfare activities were tall claims and really just a cover for seeking money, power and influence with all the corrupt practices. Thinking people wanted to form unions and its practices for clean and undisturbed educational campuses. These thinking people not only wanted to form union in educational institutions but our constitution also suggest the formation student union according to their different clauses, articles. The constitutional analysis regarding the formation of student union and its necessity may to be discussed as :—

In the constitution the students have a fundamental right to form a union in the

educational institutions and if educational democracy or democracy in education is an integral part of allround education, then participation in the activities of the student union including contesting elections to its various offices is as much the right of a student as is his admission to a university or a college. Participation in the student union established and run by the university which is "state" under Art. 12 of the constitution appears to be a fundamental right for the following reasons :—

First, of all the Art. 19 (1), (b) of the constitution involves the right to assemble peacefully. Without an assembly there can be no social education or preparation of a student to be a useful member of the society and a participator in the democratic process. The democracy of education leads to participate in the former and after completing the university education become the participator of the latter.

Next to it, the sub-clause (c) of the Art. 19 (1) involves the right to form association or unions (in the educational institutions). This means that student union can not come into existence unless the students are allowed to form an association or union.

The Art. 19 (1), (a) gave the right to education through participation in the student unions and also involves freedom of speech and expression guaranteed in the above Art. of the constitution. Free expression today is not merely the fundamental right to individual.

Thus the students have the right to speech and expression in the student union and therefore, he is free to speak what he likes. As the new concept of freedom of speech as largely accepted by the Government of United States of America is to preserve the freedom of those activities of thought and communication by which we govern. This new concept

of freedom of speech clearly shows that we have not only the right to speak but also to take part in such activities which is necessary for the development of the personality of a human being.

It is public discussion together with spreading informations which is the function of corporate activities of association like those of the student union. In the new concept of freedom of speech and expression developed within the ambit of Art. 19 (1) (a) the student has a right to participate in those activities which are essential to train themselves for the democratic process. The education of the student is said to be the very foundation of our constitution.

Thus the aim and important objectives of the student unions may be as :—

1. To promote mutual contact, a democratic outlook and a spirit of oneness among the students of the university and college.

2. To promote social, cultural and intellectual development of the students of the university and colleges.

3. To promote consciousness among the students of the university and colleges of the events taking place around them with a view to better equipping them as responsible and educated citizens and to build up a healthy student movement.

4. To promote among the students of university and colleges a sense of service to the weaker section of the society and duty towards the state.

5. To promote harmonious relations among all section of the university and college community.

6. To discuss and make representations of the university and college authorities on matters concerning common interest of the students.

As we have pointed out the important aims and objectives of the student union, there

are also some important activities for the student unions. These are :—

1. To organise cultural programmes and contests.

2. To organise debates, lectures, discussions, study circles and essay competitions etc.

3. To organise indoor games for both male and female students.

4. Participation of magazines, bulletins and wall newspapers.

5. To take educational excursion to places of historical and educational importance.

6. To start social services and social relief activities.

7. Organise and run cooperatives.

8. Organise poor boys fund and book bank to help the needy students.

9. Such other activities as will further the realisation of the above aim and objectives.

Thus, it is clear from the above discussion that the participation in the union activities for the promotion of its declared aims and objectives is an integral part of education. As right to education is guaranteed by the constitution of India in its different Articles, it is also clear that the different activities of the student unions right from admission, to the union election of its office bearers is a part of that also.

These the constitutional provisions which prove or suggest the necessity of the student union in the educational institutions. There are also a large number of factors responsible for the necessity of the student union.

First, this is the only organised platform through which the problems of the student can be solved. These problems may be of admission, hostel, fee concession or of any kind. Next factor in order of merit is for the development of democratic set up and protection of right of the student. This factor tells us that the union may train the

students for the future participation in the democratic process of our country. Student union is also necessary to promote the welfare of the students through financial and teaching aids to the poor students. Student union also channelises the student's power towards constructive activities e. g. cleaning the campus of the college and university, to check the indiscipline activities and constructing hostels etc. The student union is also essential for the development of social, cultural and political activities of the students.

Nowadays a large number of student leaders think that the union is necessary because this is the only organisation which solves the problems arising from the failure of appropriate action being taken by the authorities. Most of the student agitation start after non acceptance of the demands by the university and college authorities. Most of the leaders also think union are necessary because, there must be a student's representative in the institution who take part in different convention and seminars on behalf of students. The union is a powerful organisation capable of pressurising the authorities to get the students demands accepted.

There were not only constitutional and student opinion who thought that student union is must for students but also all the Vice-chancellors of the state universities supported the union for the students.

All the vice-chancellors were of the opinion that the shape of the student union should be patterned on the lines of the recommendation made by the second Education commission presided over by the Dr. D. S. Kothari —

The proposal runs as follows :

1. Subject Association should be formed for each department. The membership of the subject association will be compulsory. A student can however, choose more than one Association. Membership fees will be prescribed and charged.

2. The Executive committee of subject Association will comprise the best student with academic distinction of the class concerned and students seated as being the best in the games. Members of the executive committee thus formed will elect their office bearers like the President General secretary etc. of the student association.

3. Every student on roll in the university college will automatically be a member of union or council as it may be called.

4. Students will elect their President and secretaries etc.

5. The Vice-chancellor/Principal will be the patron of the union and will nominate one of the teachers as the treasurer of the university/college student union.

The above discussion as to whether theoretical (the legal one) or the practical (the opinion of the student leaders and other authorities) clarified that the second school of thought is more effective than the first, i. e. there must be a union of students in educational institutions.

It is the need of the time and like the Agriculture revolution, Industrial revolution, White revolution etc. we must start Educational revolution which aims at developing the child, student and youth. And in this there should be no distinction in the basis of caste, creed, regionalism and communalism etc.

OLYMPIC NEWS

ON THE EVE OF THE GAMES :

The IOC session whose official opening ceremony took place in the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR on July 14, will mainly discuss problems dealing with the future olympic games rather than with the present ones because the preparation for the 1980 Olympiad is completed and there is no dissatisfaction with it. The IOC executive's previous sittings discussed precisely this question and outlined in particular the prospects of the expansion of the olympic programme.

All these questions are undoubtedly of great importance for the progress of the world olympic movement. Athletes from many countries have come to Moscow to compete in the Olympic Games which are to open on July 19. Over 2,500 athletes from some 70 countries have already taken up their quarters in the Olympic village. Bulgaria's equestrians and gymnasts and Spain's basket-ball players have just arrived at the village. A new group of over 100 Soviet sportsmen who completed their last pre-olympic training period has been recently accommodated in the village's residential zone.

The Soviet capital's eight-million population is increasing with each passing day due to olympic guests from other Soviet cities and from other countries. The international youth camp built in a picturesque nook of Moscow region, not far from the Moscow-sheremetyevo airport motor road, has received its first residents.

Nine-storey hotels and a camp of tents on an area of 37 hectares can accommodate a thousand and a half young men and women from various countries. There are also a stadium with a football field, a running track and sport grounds, an open-air cinema seating 800, a canteen for 500 guests, a library, and a discotheque. The extensive cultural, entertainment and sport programmes for the youth have already started to be implemented.

Spanish sport fans came to Moscow with one of the first groups of foreign tourists. A lot of foreign guests, including those from West Germany, Cuba, Poland and the USA, are now touring the Soviet Union. They will arrive in Moscow on the eve of the opening ceremony. All foreign guests with olympic tours will be able to watch competitions which they have chosen, and if they wish to attend others, the USSR travel company Intourist, the general agent of the organising committee of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, will assist them in this case, too.

Olympic Moscow wholeheartedly welcomes numerous guests, and together with them follows the olympic torch relay. Having passed the Ukraine it has now entered the Russian federation. In the remaining days the torch-bearers will have to cover 700 kilometres. On July, 17, two days before the official opening of the Games, a dress rehearsal of the opening ceremony will take place in the main arena of the Games, the central stadium in Luzhniki, at which tens of thousands of sport fans will be present.

OLYMPIC TIMETABLE IN MINSK

Historically, Minsk is more than nine centuries old, but it is surprisingly young and beautiful these days. The city residents have planted hundreds of new flower fields and laid out squares in preparation for the grand Olympic holiday. Student hostels, hotels, motels, and camping-sites are ready to accommodate the visitors. The Planet hotel alone will accommodate more than 600 of them at a single time. Its staff numbering 500 welcomed the first group of olympic foreign tourists on July 14. As the hotel director says, "the Planet will live up to its name": people of various countries of Europe, Africa and Asia will be staying there during the Games.

The olympic highway, from Brest to Moscow, is becoming livelier each day. Many foreign-built cars have now appeared on it. Maximum conveniences have been provided for the drivers and passengers. All the required services are available, and modern traffic safety requirements and information for drivers have also been taken in consideration. On the whole way from Brest to Minsk there are 44 roofed parking stations and 11 open-air parking lots, as well as additional service stations, rest-rooms, petrol filling stations and first-aid centres. Dynamo stadium, the main arena in Minsk, has long been ready for the olympic preliminary football games to be held there. A number of USSR first division games have already been staged on the new pitch there.

The olympic football team of Syria have already settled down in Minsk's olympic village, in the Staiki sports camp. They have held their first practices on one of the eight playing fields in Staiki, and also have had time to make a number of sightseeing tours around the Byelorussian capital.

The olympic flame will be lit and the

referee's whistle will be blown for the start of the first olympic football game in Dynamo stadium on July 26. Minsk and its residents are eagerly looking forward to the Olympic Games. The city's preparations for the Games have been highly assessed by the participants in the 43rd Congress of the International Sporting Press Association, who recently travelled to Byelorussia.

SWIMMING

The main contenders to the gold awards at the Moscow Olympic swimming tournament will be besides Soviet swimmers, world record holder Par Arvilsson of Sweden (100 m butterfly), European record holders of the GDR (100 m free style) and Zoltan Wladak of Hungary (200 m back stroke), Duncan Goodhew of Great Britain (100 m breast stroke), Djan Madruga of Brazil (400 m and 1,500 m freestyle.)

Women swimmers from the German Democratic Republic achieved highest speeds at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. They won 11 gold medals out of 13. Now, ready for new competitions are champions of the previous Olympic Games Andrea Pollack (200 m butterfly) and Ulrike Tauber (400 m medley), as well as Barbara Krause (100 m freestyle), Ute Jeweniger (100 m breaststroke) and Petra Schneider (400 m medley).

After the Montreal Olympics Soviet women swimmers established 38 national records, including six world records. They scored victories at the European Championship in 1977 and the World Championship in 1978.

DENMARK'S OLYMPIC TEAM

Some 120 athletes will be on Denmark's olympic team entering for many sports, but excelling in sailing.

Helmsman Ensen will head the "Soling" class entry for the Olympics. At the Montreal games in 1976 he carried off the gold. Danish fans are eagerly looking forward to the "tornado" and "finn" races where their crews are among the favourites. Great hopes are pinned on Hjørtnes, 20, who, changing over to the "finn" class, more than once made the top at recent contests. The latest results indicate that Denmark's yachtsmen have real chances for the Tallinn gold.

Denmark's cyclists are of world class standing. The favourite is undoubtedly arrested, who chalked up five world records at contests in Mexico last year. Danish specialists are sure of his victory in Moscow unless there is an unforeseeable upset. The unexpected progress of Gustensen, who carried off the title from the trap shooting world championships last year, makes for a new look at the chances of Danish athletes in other sports as well.

Practically all leading athletes of Denmark were preparing for the olympic games. The National Olympic Committee and the Sports Federations of the country, however, made extremely high demands on olympic possibles, believing that world class results are imperative for the tickets to Moscow.

OLYMPHIL-80: SPORTS STAMP-COLLECTOR'S REVIEW

"Olympic history in philately," such is the title of the collection made by Juan Antonio Samaranch, Chairman of the IOC Press-Commission, which is on display at the Olympphil-80 Exhibition. This stamp-collector's review opened in the Moscow Central Exhibition Hall is one of the arrangements of the olympic art and entertainment programme.

They say that every sixth person of the

world collected or continues to collect stamps. Anyway, there are millions of philate lists throughout the world. As for stamp-collecting, it serves the cause of peace and friendship between nations. It has been included in the olympic cultural programme since 1964.

Of great interest are collections made by foreign philatelists, in particular, "The first 50 years of the olympic games" by B. Simady from Hungary and "Peace cycling races" by H. Kasch from the German Democratic Republic.

The Olympphil-80 exposition is the history of world sports achievements over nearly 100 years. It shows the first olympic issues of 1896, rarities and rare postal cancellations. Each exhibit is a miniature masterpiece and a document at the same time.

"I am not a stamp-collector and have come here by chance," says Ludwig Holtz from the Austrian city of Linz. "Yet, I cannot but admire this wonderful show. Though I am not a young man, but I think to begin stamp-collecting as well. To my mind, stamps are the best souvenirs and keepsakes of the olympic games."

The first miniature sheet in honour of the olympics of 1980 was issued in 1947. Some 80 stamps and miniature sheets devoted to the 22 olympic games have been brought out since then.

INDIA ISSUES POSTAGE STAMPS

New Delhi, July 17 India's department of Post and Telegraph issued two colorful postage stamps to mark the 22nd

Olympic Games. They will be on sale on the opening day of the Moscow Olympics. The stamps depict high jumping and equestrian show jumping. A special envelope has also been issued. The commemorative stamps will be specially cancelled on July 19.

MEXICO'S STAMPS

The Ministry of Communications and Transport of Mexico is issuing a series of postal stamps devoted to the 1980 Olympics. Three stamps with the well-known matoc of the Olympics, Misha, and the symbolic five rings will be on sale at post offices from July 19, the opening day of the Moscow Games. The medals for the winners of the Olympics Games are depicted on the stamps.

The new stamps will be specially cancelled at the main post office of the Mexican capital on the opening and closing days of the games.

OPENING CERMONY OF MOSCOW OLYMPICS

Moscow, July 17: By tradition and in accordance with the Olympic Charter the games are opened by the head of the state hosting them. In Moscow this tradition will also be observed, said Mr. Vladimir Koval, Vice-Chairman of the Olympiad-80 Organizing Committee at the press conference held in the main press centre.

The scenario of the world sports festival has been worked out by a team of prominent Soviet art directors, artists, composers, poets and engineers and has been approved by the International Olympic Committee.

While preparing the opening ceremony of the games the organizing committee took into account the experience and traditions of holding such festivals since the times of ancient Greece and strove to impart new features to this ceremony determined by the spirit of time,

The ceremony will be held in the main arena of the Lenin stadium in Moscow on July 19. The stadium has accommodation for over 100,000 spectators. All tickets have been sold out. Foreign tourists have been allotted 35 per cent of the tickets. All accredited sports writers (there will be several thousand of them) have been invited to the opening ceremony. Thanks to television with the use of Soviet communication satellites the ceremony will be watched by about 2,000 million TV viewers on five continents.

The Olympic flag will be handed over to the hosts of the 1980 Olympics by a delegation of the Municipality of Montreal. In our days of the rapid development and enormous popularity of sport, there are so many equally famous athletes that it is impossible to single out a small group for this without offending the feelings of others. That is why the Olympic flag will be carried by rank-and-file Soviet athletes whose names will not be disclosed. Let them be appreciated by the audience not as stars, but as a symbol of the beauty and elegance of sport.

The parade and the Olympic oath are envisaged by the Olympic Charter. The Organizing Committee believes that teams come to the games to express their solidarity with the ideas of the Olympic movement.

In the second part of the opening ceremony which is of a sport and artistic character more than 16,000 Soviet athletes, amateur and professional actors will show their skills and art.

Everyone will admire the performance by young gymnasts—pupils of children's sports schools. Nine-to eleven-year-old athletes will demonstrate gymnastics of top class.

In the choreographic suite "friendship of peoples" the spectators will see Soviet multinational art with its diversity of melodies, dresses, traditions and customs.

The holding of the opening ceremony as

a bright and unforgettable festival required modern material and technical equipment according to plans and models by engineers and artists-designers. Two hundred Moscow enterprises manufactured over half a million costumes and properties and also more than 100 various special structures.

The grand opening ceremony of the Moscow Olympics will last for about three hours.



Current Affairs

FLOOD—A PERENNIAL

PROBLEM ?

"Jamuna in spate, Ganga causes havoc, Brahmaputra crosses the danger mark—" these are some of the familiar headlines during the months of July, August and September in almost all the Indian news-papers. The undesparring Indian, who puts a good and bold face upon all calamities, has taken it as another misfortune in his daily stride of miseries, because astrologers predict drought if not excessive rain and floods. The older generation always remembers and recounts that the problem of floods was not so serious soon after the independence. Still more older people do not hesitate, to add that this is all due to the misdeeds of the younger generation that the divine wrath is let loose.

Whatever may be the reasons given by these physically aged people, one can not deny the fact that floods have become a perennial problem in almost all regions of India. It is no more the big rivers only but even the smaller rivers cause tremendous destruction.

The sceptics, some times, say that the flood problem is not deliberately tackled by the Government as the ministers get an opportunity to show

off their concern for the people. Visits by the ministers to these flood effected areas, especially by a plane or a helicopter is again front page news. However, to tackle the floods one has to understand the problem.

The problem of floods has to be attacked at the source in the catchment area of the rivers. It is the quick run off of the rain water over denuded slopes and the increased amount of silt accompanying it that suddenly swells a river and often leads to flash floods. In fact, the misdeeds or thoughtless acts of man are the deforestation of the slopes of the catchment area, allowing the soil to be loose, due to the absence of the binding roots. This deforestation has steadily increased to meet the demands of the growing population year-in and year-out without any attempts to plant new forests. The washed out soil or silt makes the river bed shallower and the flow narrower. The river which once used to carry the flood waters can now contain it no more and the water has to spill over the embankment and find its route to the sea through low lying villages and human habitation. Breach of embankment is a common phenomena. Though

reinforcement of the embankment is necessary, it is not enough. Desilting the river from time to time to keep the flow of water clear is essential and a systematic plantation growth or afforestation in the catchment area is the dire need of the time. Unless these steps are taken the emergency measures applied can at best only mitigate the magnitude of the sufferings. Afforestation of the catchment area not only curbs the fury of the floods but also provides for gradual release of the absorbed rain water from the catchment.

Just the other day there was a report that the Hirakund Dam is fast silting up. Now it is estimated that its life will be 77 years instead of 111 years envisaged earlier. The soil conservation department of the state has submitted a report to the government which stated "small and medium dams are silting up even faster and some dams eight times faster making minor irrigation system functionless". The silting is also confirmed by the Dam's research station by hydraulic and sedimentary surveys. Silting is mainly due to the terrain through which the river passes. This is again shown by the Machkund Dam in Koraput District and Indrawati Dam in Kalahandi District, both in the state of Orissa, which are free from silting because the terrain is wooded and there is practically no sand.

The Union Government has taken

a serious view of this perennial problem and proposes to spend Rs. 15,000 crores over the next five years on the control of floods. As pointed out, the major amount will go in afforestation in all the catchment areas, desilting the heavily silted river beds, reinforcing the embankments along the river course, reopening the clogged canals, and introducing new canals for the proper distribution of water.

The whole programme of the government will come to nought if there is no cooperation from the general public. It is as much a government duty as a public responsibility. Massive propaganda programme will have to be started. It is not enough that new trees be planted—three or four for every one felled. But the slogan should be "Have you tended your trees today?" Otherwise the campaign will go the way of 'Van Mahotsava' started almost 30 years ago by the far-sighted Dr. K. M. Munshi. It has become a mere ritual every year for the government official and a head for expenses.

The other major problem of our rivers is the filth that we throw in them. A healthy stream or river can cleanse itself of waste matter, especially organic matter—animal, bird and fish excretions and carcasses, decaying plant life and a fair amount of sewage—within a few kilometers. But this self purifying property breaks

down when the waste dumped becomes rather heavy.

Today we have more than 142 major towns and cities situated on the banks of the rivers which discharge their untreated waste in the river. We still have the faith that our holy rivers can cleanse anything. But it is, in fact, a lack of understanding or appreciation of the problem. It is a conflict of age old faith with modern developments sans understanding. Several of our rivers have become a veritable source of disease and carriers of death. It was not long back that the industrial wastes of a paper mill in some Madhya Pradesh river caused skin disease amongst the villagers or the distillery wastes in Maharashtra near Bombay killed all the fish in 16 kilometers stretch of Pravara river. The country still remembers with a shudder the jaundice epidemic of Delhi caused by the polluted river water of Jamuna. More than 20,000 people were stricken and there were quite a few deaths.

However, it is possible to release industrial as well as household wastes in the river if they are treated earlier, without them being a burden to the natural cleansing property of the river. It is estimated that the sewerage treatment plants for these major towns will cost about Rs. 1,200 crores. This is a large sum but not an impossible figure; spread over years it does not seem unreasonable. One

can consider the problem in the following way: There was a time when no sanitary facilities were available in villages and many towns. People used to leave it to Nature. But with the pressure of population Nature refused to process the refuse and we were compelled to have the proper sanitation in towns and cities. The slum rehabilitation has it as an important item—providing it modern sanitation. Now the time has come that the density of towns and cities on the rivers have increased to such an extent that it is high time that we think of proper sanitation for these towns and make it compulsory to process the wastes before discharging them into the river.

We considered the various problems of the river which caused floods, destroying the property of the people and leaving a legacy of diseases; we considered the pollution of rivers which are carriers of many deadly diseases; at the same time we also discussed various steps which can be taken to prevent or minimise this wonton use of the river and its terrain. However, the government by spending huge amounts from the public exchequer can not achieve anything unless there is whole-hearted support from every strata of the society.

What is needed is the organisation of youth to these nation building activities. An active interest in

afforestation by the youth organisations both for plantation and tending will lighten the burden of forest conservators. Forests are our national property and they should be protected. Holiday expeditions by school and college students of urban areas to these regions to donate their part of labour should form part of the educational curriculum. School children in villages can form groups and tend the embankments of rivers flowing through their villages. As there are many schools in rural areas, it is not impossible to cover the whole course of the river. Their task should be to maintain the embankment in proper shape and raise deep rooted grasses and trees along it to avoid soil erosion from the sides. Trees on the river side will not only improve the aesthetic value of the place but will provide a cleaner atmosphere and healthier surroundings for the people. Let us once again inculcate the idea of sacredness of the river, not from blind religious faith, not for a better place in the next world; but to make this world a better place to live in. If the youth power is properly harnessed irrespective of its narrow (political) party lines, or religious separatism, castes or provincial divisions, then the problem will disappear in no time. The woes of the country will lead to constructive activity which in turn will give a solid cohesiveness and impetus to real national spirit.

WHAT ARE THEY ARMING PAKISTAN FOR ?

Pakistan has been assigned a special place in the Peking leadership's subversive plans aimed against India. Playing on the problems and contradictions existing between Pakistan and India, and taking advantage of the ambitious strivings of the military regime in Islamabad, as well as its interest in economic aid, Peking managed to force upon Pakistan a whole series of agreements, including military ones, which it hopes to benefit.

The Sino-Pakistani agreement on the construction of the Karakorum mountain highway linking the Chinese province of Xinjiang with Pakistan signed in the mid-60s is a good example to illustrate this. When planning the construction of that military strategic route, Peking already in those days foresaw the implementation of its further expansionist and hegemonistic aspirations with regard to South Asia and, above all, India. The construction of the Karakorum highway provided China with the possibility of reaching further into India's flank.

The Peking leaders have time and again declared that China is interested in a strong Pakistan. And China has become one of Pakistan's major arms suppliers. According to General Zia-Ul-Haq, Pakistan has received a total of 2,000 million dollars' worth of Chinese "aid" since 1966, most of it in the form of arms and ammunition. Peking has, in particular, supplied the Pakistani army with about 700 tanks and several squadrons of fighter planes. It has helped Pakistan to build a plant manufacturing tank engines and several arms production complexes. Another military project—a plant for the repairs of bombers—was commissioned in Kamra the other day. Sino-Pakistani military cooperation developed particularly swiftly after the completion of the Karakorum highway, now

used for the intensive flow of arms and military equipment to Pakistan. Furthermore, hundreds of Chinese military specialists are currently in Pakistan.

All this is subordinated to the main aim of entangling Pakistan with military commitments and forcing it to follow in the wake of the PRC's hegemonistic policy and thus to draw it into confrontation with India. It is significant that Peking's policy with regard to Pakistan has always enjoyed the full understanding and support of the United States and its allies. Suffice it to say that since 1947 the United States has supplied Pakistan with 5,000 million dollars' worth of various military and economic aid. In 1955 the United States and Pakistan signed a special agreement on military political cooperation.

For many years now Peking and Washington have been, separately or jointly, encouraging and fanning adventuristic tendencies in Islamabad's policy, egging it on to the road of armed provocations against India. The peoples of the subcontinent have not yet forgotten that the massed arms deliveries to Pakistan have already twice led to military actions in South Asia, through the fault of Islamabad.

Of late Pakistan has become a target of Peking's and Washington's intensive intrigues. This became particularly obvious after the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran and the triumph of the April Revolution in Afghanistan. The United States and China are using the territory of Pakistan as a military spring-board for carrying out acts of subversion and armed struggle against the neighbouring states, India included. In fact, Pakistan, has been assigned the very same unseemly roles which it has already played back in the 50s and 60s when serving as a base of expansionism and aggression.

Peking and Washington promise the current

military rulers in Islamabad generous financial and military aid under the pretext of the "need to repel" an alleged threat to Pakistan's security in connection with the events in Afghanistan. This was, in particular, discussed during US Defense Secretary Harold Brown's recent visit in Peking. The United States has declared its readiness to grant Pakistan 400 million dollars as military aid which, according to Brzezinski, the US President's National Security Adviser, is regarded as "only the beginning."

Washington and Islamabad have also reached agreement on revising and supplementing the agreement on cooperation signed in 1959, in favour of strengthening its military aspects.

In keeping with the revised agreement, the Pentagon has actively set about developing plans to deploy its armed forces and create military bases on Pakistan's territory.

In the interests of a strong Pakistan, the United States must set up air and naval bases there, said former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

According to reports by Tokyo Shimbun and Mainichi Shimbun, China, in its turn, has promised to considerably increase its military and economic aid to Pakistan, declaring that it intends to satisfy any of Islamabad's demands. In agreement with Washington, Peking gives every encouragement to Islamabad's nuclear ambitions, evidently considering this to be an additional means of blackmailing its neighbours and particularly India.

The questions naturally arise: does Islamabad ever ask why Pakistan is being armed? In what direction are Peking and Washington drawing it? What it could gain from relations of enmity with its neighbours? It is well known to all that nobody threatens Pakistan.

India and Afghanistan have time and again demonstrated their sincere striving to live in

peace, friendship and good-neighbourliness with Pakistan, and consistently come out in favour of solving the problems and differences that exist between them by peaceful means, by means of talks and without any outside interference.

This is evidenced, in particular, by the recent trip to Pakistan by a special representative of India and the latter's reaffirmation of its desire to build its relations on the basis of the Simla agreement signed in 1972. The joint Indo-Afghan Communiqué, too, contains appeals for peace and friendship with Pakistan. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not only failed to reciprocate all these good-will gestures, but it allows itself to be drawn ever deeper into the dangerous game which Peking and Washington are conducting against the South Asian peoples, India included. More than that, it can be gathered from General Zia-Ul-Haq's statement that he is satisfied to note that his country promoted the rapprochement between the US and China.

NEPAL'S REACTIONS TO THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN

The despatch of a large contingent of troops by the Soviet Union to Afghanistan in December 1979 and their continued presence since then in that country are developments of far-reaching significance not only for the countries of the region but also for the international community at large. The issue in fact is a highly complicated international problem in which not only the policies and interests of the two Super Powers are in sharp conflict but also the nations of the region feel concerned about the developments likely to impinge on their security and independence. In fact, for most of the countries of the Third World also, the issue is a glaring example of flouting the norms of interstate behaviour.

In the present crisis one of Afghanistan's big neighbour—the Soviet Union, a Communist country—has sent its army to shape the political order against the strong opposition of another Super Power—the United States. To the United States, the crisis poses an imminent danger to its only solid influence base in this region viz., Pakistan. To the People's Republic of China, it signifies the expansion of the perimeter of its rival's (Soviet Union's) political influence.

In such a situation there is not much that a small power like Nepal can do; nevertheless, the situational stimuli and the psychological predispositions of Nepal's decision-makers need to be explained. Both Nepal and Afghanistan are friendly, small, non-aligned Asian countries not too far apart. Whereas Nepal is a part of the South Asian state system, Afghanistan also forms at least the appendix, if not the functional ingredient, of this system. Both face big neighbours and have similar problems as land-locked states.

The present Soviet action even though justified as having been requested for by the lawful government of the country, raises pertinent questions: Has the big Power, however friendly or good intentioned it might be, the right to play an active role to the extent of using military force in the domestic politics of a small neighbour? Is the lawful government of a (small) state morally or legally competent to ask for large scale military help from a big Power mainly for domestic purposes without the specific sanction of its peoples? and, Should a small non-aligned country be allowed to be a hotbed of big Power politics and rivalry.

Apart from these questions which emanate from the nature of the crisis, the parties directly or indirectly affected by it and their policy postures, together with Nepal's equation with such parties, are also important

for a clear understanding of Kathmandu's reaction. Nepal as a non-aligned-country has consistently been maintaining a policy of equal friendship with both the Super Powers and its too big neighbours, India and China. All these countries are deeply concerned with the developments in Afghanistan. The United States of America and the People's Republic of China are vehemently opposed to the Soviet action cutting across their conflicting ideologies. In fact, as is evident from the recent trends in international politics, alignment of nations transcends the bonds of ideology. Pakistan, a regional Power and a close neighbour of Afghanistan with whom Nepal also has always maintained good friendly rapport is literally following the Sino-American line. Nepal's age-old friend, the United Kingdom also subscribes to the Sino-American point of view. Further, a large number of non-aligned countries with whom Nepal co-operates in international conferences also condemn the Soviet military presence in a weak and non-aligned state. As against this, India with whom it has much more extensive contacts than any other country in the world and with whom it is supposed to have consultation and cooperation on the question of an issue affecting mutual security is pursuing a line of policy which, while trying to shield the Soviet Union from outright condemnation, intends to defuse the crisis and make the region free from the politics of big and external Powers.

All these form the scenario to which the decision-makers in Nepal are to react. But their own psychological dispositions provide them the spectacles to perceive the situation. Since the accession of King Mahendra to the throne in Nepal, the King, the political leaders of all shades, whether in government for outside, and even public opinion have with one voice been strongly opposed, rather extremely sensitive, to any country's interference in its

internal affairs. Not unnaturally, non-interference in each other's affairs is one of the corner-stones of the principles of inter-state relations Nepal believes in and repeatedly emphasizes in almost all the international forums. In fact, this has direct bearing on its own security and political stability. In the light of its own past experiences, Nepal harbours suspicions about its big neighbours, and as a result, it has developed what may be termed as some sort of psychophobia. Therefore, the psychological bent of the Nepalese elites is such which does not brook any interference of a state in another's internal affairs. It is not merely a matter of conviction but a shield for them to safeguard their country's independence and sovereignty. Again, it is this fear-psychology, which originates from its own precarious existence between two big neighbours which propels Nepal to be a vocal champion of the rights of small Powers in international forums and also drives it to forge unity even at the cost sometimes of incurring the displeasure and annoyance of its big friendly neighbour, India.

OFFICIAL NEPALESE REACTIONS TO THE CRISIS

The first reaction of the Government of Nepal to the developments in Afghanistan was available on 1 January 1980 when a spokesman of the Foreign Ministry issued a statement in Kathmandu saying :

His Majesty's Government has been watching events in Afghanistan with increasing concern. Recent developments, including the large foreign military presence, in that non-aligned sovereign country have deeply aggravated our concern, since they pose a danger to peace and stability. His Majesty's Government believes in the inviolability of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their right to determine and chart

their own destiny themselves without foreign interference. Nepal opposes foreign intervention wherever it may occur. Nepal believes as a matter of faith and principle that foreign troops be withdrawn forthwith within national boundaries.

A few days later, at a meeting with foreign press correspondents in Kathmandu on 4 January 1980, the Nepalese Foreign Minister, K. B. Shahi deplored the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan and called for their early withdrawal.

Nepal's reaction was thus prompt and unequivocal. It has remained firm on its stand and has strongly reacted to any attempt to misinterpret or misrepresent its point of view. For instance, when it was brought to the notice of the Nepalese Government that the Soviet news agency Tass had circulated a report saying that the Foreign Ministry of Nepal did not regard the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan as an interference in the internal affairs of that country and that the report was also broadcast by All India Radio, promptly on 6 January 1980 the Nepalese Foreign Ministry contradicted it and termed it as "not only a distortion but a complete reversal of facts." Reiterating its stand on the situation it maintained: "The principled stand consistently taken by Nepal on the inviolability of the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of states and against any form of interference in their internal affairs is known to the international community."

Threat to International Peace and Security—

About its line of action, the Foreign Ministry spokesman clearly stated:

The UN Security Council is now discussing the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. His Majesty's Government fully supports the UN Security Council's consideration of the question, which in its view, clearly represents a

threat to international peace and sovereignty. His Majesty's Government deplores the intervention and hopes that the Security Council will uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter by calling upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops immediately from Afghanistan, thereby enabling the people of that country to determine their destiny themselves without interference.

Later when the issue of Afghanistan was brought before the General Assembly on 14 January 1980, Nepal's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Uddhav Dav Bhatta, made his country's position clear by asserting that the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan contributed a threat to international peace and security and, unless eliminated immediately, it would have a far-reaching and negative impact on peace, stability and the atmosphere of co-operation and understanding of the region and beyond. He further added: "The presence of foreign troops has put at stake not only the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan but also the fabric of civilized relationships between states." On 15 January 1980, Nepal voted in favour of a resolution at the emergency session of the General Assembly which called for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan. The Nepalese stand was thus quite different from that of India which had abstained from voting in the General Assembly on that issue. Nor did Nepal try to link Soviet intervention with the Sino-American and Pakistani designs and activities in Afghanistan which India had been emphasizing right from the beginning of the Soviet action. In fact, the Nepalese Foreign Minister, K. B. Shahi, at a meeting with foreign press correspondents in Kathmandu on 4 January 1980, had described the United States decision to rearm Pakistan as a "bilateral affair" but

soon corrected himself by adding that "rearming of any country in any part of the world will only create tension." This, however, revealed that in the Nepalese thinking the United States design and activities in the region should not be considered as an excuse for the large scale direct military interventions by the Soviet Union.

The Government of India was and is still keen that the countries of the region should evolve a consensus on their approach to the Afghanistan crisis and take a united stand to defuse it. The Indian Foreign Secretary R. D. Sathe, therefore, went to Kathmandu on a two-day visit on 18 February 1980 exclusively to impress upon Kathmandu to view the Afghanistan crisis from an Indian perspective, although he described his visit as "exploratory" and pertaining to the international situation as well as bilateral relations in the economic and technical fields. However, when questioned by newsmen on his arrival in Kathmandu, he explained his real mission stating: "We will also discuss the situation in the region and convey to His Majesty's Government our perception of the situation. We will not seek any solution but will try to understand each other's viewpoints. There is no question of trying to create a front as we are not opposing anyone. The idea is to defuse the situation."

True, there is not much substantial difference between India and Nepal on the question. Neither of them is happy with the presence of Soviet forces in the region. Both of them consider the development detrimental to peace and security in the region and both want the withdrawal of Soviet troops. But whereas India feels constrained to make an outright and unilateral condemnation of the Soviet action asking for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Soviet forces because of its delicate diplomatic dependence

on Moscow, Nepal has no such restraints. Also, as a small and weak Power the development pinches more intensely its feeling of insecurity than it does in the case of India. The outburst of its reaction, is, therefore, natural.

Talks at the Foreign Secretary level between Nepal and India concluded on 19 February 1980. Both the Nepalese and Indian sides expressed deep concern over the prevailing situation; it was agreed that withdrawal of foreign troops and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country constituted the essential basis for the establishment of a climate of peace and mutual trust among the countries of the area. Apart from expressing this deep commitment to general stability in the region which had remained free of tension for a long time, both sides also agreed that the call to arms in the area was not conducive to peace and stability in the region. Both sides also agreed that "the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country constituted the essential basis for the establishment of a climate of peace and mutual trust."

The Indian Foreign Secretary's visit to Kathmandu and his discussions with Nepalese officials did not impress upon Kathmandu to toe the Indian line although both sides maintained that they had similarity of views on the Afghan issue. Unlike India, the Nepalese Government continued to restrain themselves from condemning the US-China-Pakistan axis along with the Soviet Union on their dangerous game in the region. It however, only agreed to dub the "call of arms in the area as not conducive to peace and stability, in the region" thus obliquely referring to the United States policy of arming Pakistan.

EXTENDING

The life of commercial fruit

Dan Izenbery writes in News From Israel :—

Doctors Shimshon Ben Yehoshua and David Nahir have developed a method of seal packaging individual fruits and vegetables in a special polyethylene film. The technique preserves produce longer than the common waxing method (which, in fact, Ben Yehoshua developed in the early 1960s) and is both simple and inexpensive.

The high-density polyethylene wrap which the scientists have developed here has aroused interest in countries all over the world, including the United States and Australia. The scientists have proved that the new packaging technique can preserve the life of fruits and vegetables far longer at room temperature than can present methods, even using optimal, artificially cooled storage places.

FATHER OF "WAXING" TECHNIQUE

Dr. Ben Yehoshua first became involved in fruit and vegetable packaging as a doctoral student at U. C. L. A. some 20 years ago. Today, he is a member of the staff of the Agricultural Research Organization's Division of Fruit and Vegetable Storage, at the Volcani Center near Tel Aviv.

After returning from the United States, Dr. Ben Yehoshua, in collaboration with the Plastics Department of the Weizmann Institute of Science, developed a process for "waxing" fruit in order to delay senescence—the scientific term for decay. The waxing process involved dipping the fruit in a solution containing high-density polyethylene. The technique had been used in the past but the formula making up the solution was new. It proved far more effective than previous polymers and was adopted by many countries.

The synthetic coating to the fruit provided a substitute for the fruit's natural wax. The wax had been lost at an earlier stage of the

packaging process when the fruit was disinfected. Scientists were aware that the fruit's natural ingredients acted to delay senescence, but they did not entirely understand how or why.

SAVING MOISTURE SAVES FRUIT

Ben Yehoshua came to the conclusion that fruit and vegetable longevity was strongly and directly affected by the rate of moisture loss in the fruit. Thus he theorized that if the fruit could be effectively sealed with a substance which prevented transpiration, the life of the fruit would be prolonged. He found, however, that waxing—even using his improved formula—was not a foolproof technique ; cracks could form along the peel and moisture could escape through the unprotected areas.

The answer, then, lay in finding a way to completely seal the fruit. In 1972 Ben Yehoshua embarked on a new project involving the development of a film which would completely protect the fruit and delay moisture loss. He used the same high-density polyethylene solution he had developed earlier.

The results turned out to be even more successful than anticipated. Not only Ben Yehoshua develop a more effective way of preserving the life of fruits and vegetables—at the same time he found that the sealing technique enabled him to control the process of fruit and vegetable ripening. That is, within limits, he could speed up or delay the ripening process at will.

Results of intensive testing with Dr. Ben Yehoshua's high-density polyethylene film showed :

1. Sealed fruit maintains its fresh appearance and flavor for up to a year while conventional fruit begins to deteriorate after two months.
2. The film protects rot from spreading from

one fruit to another. This is a vital factor in packaging where a large number of fruits are stored together at close quarters and, as the saying goes, "One rotten apple spoils the lot."

3. The film creates a new and highly limited micro-atmosphere for each fruit, and this micro-atmosphere which contains chemical and organic substances affects the life process of the fruit. Since it is limited by the film surrounding the fruit, it can easily be controlled artificially. For example, the injection of ethylene into the film will speed up the

process of de-greening. Ethylene-absorbing chemicals injected into the film will delay that same process.

Dr. Ben Yehoshua estimates the cost of sealing the fruit at (U.S.) 20 cents per carton of 100 pieces of fruit. He and David Nahir of the Agricultural Research Organization's Institute of Agricultural Engineering have developed a sealing machine which efficiently wraps the fruit in the new film. Patents for the entire process are now pending in various countries.

REPRINT SECTION

DUE TO INNUMERABLE REQUESTS FROM SUBSCRIBERS FOR COPIES OF "MODERN REVIEW" & "PRABASI" FOR ARTICLES, NOTES AND OTHER MATTER PUBLISHED FROM 1908 IN THESE JOURNALS, THE MANAGEMENT HAS DECIDED TO PRINT A REPRINT SECTION IN SUBSEQUENT NUMBERS OF THESE JOURNALS AS IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO FORWARD NUMBERS OF OLD JOURNALS ON REQUEST—

Management.

MY HELEN

SHASI BHUSAN DAS

Helen was beautiful.

You also are beautiful.

So you are my Helen.

I shall love you to the end of time and to the end of
the world.

If, of course, my life span reaches upto that end

at all.

Helen launched a thousand ships

And was the cause of the burning of the city

to Troy.

But my Helen, you cannot do that,

For there is no city of Troy now to be burnt.

But you can at least burn the city of my heart

By your darts of hatred, contempt, and indifference,

By your unkind words and wily ways,

which a beautiful woman inherits from Nature.

If you cannot launch a thousand ships,
 You can at least launch a thousand words,
 which your soft and Kind looks may inspire in me
 To write a poem about you and your beauty.

Those words will not burn the topless towers of
a city.
 But they will help me to build an edifice in thymes
 That may make you and me immortal,
 As the Taj did Shahjahan and Mumtaj, his
consort royal.

Helen, my Queen, you are beautiful and lovely.
 But I am bald-headed, old, and quite likely, ugly.
 Still I pray, let the light of your tender eyes fall
on me.
 If you don't, your image in my soul will be
wronged and
 wrecked
 By being berhymed in my rhymeless Poem,

So for your own sake and for your beauty's sake,
 Love me and be loved by me in my immortal song
 So I sing the praise of your gazelle eyes and
dark locks
 of hair.

The Grecian form of your body, a sculptor's
model, slender
and fair
A painter's portrait, a poet's poem, and my
soul's loveliest
image.

Sweet are your lips, sweeter still are the words
that come
forth from them,
Like an invisible waterfall that gurgles and glides
down a
parted rock of red.
But sweetest of all are your lovely, ripening
breasts which
Keats
Might have envied, and wished to have been

pillowed upon.
I do not envy them: they are far beyond my reach
and desire.
Reserve them for your Keatses and Parises.
Better so.
I only pray, give me your looks, beautiful and kind.
They will be enough to enkindle beauty in
my mind.

Enough to create things of beauty,
Which may be a joy to me for ever,
And for some time, it may be,
A joy to some others as well.

Mephistophiles called up the ghots of Helen
of Troy

And made her pass across the stage,
For Faustus wished in the last hour of his life
To be immortal with a kiss from her.

My Helen, I cannot desire that, you know.
For I believe you are somewhere still alive
With Cleopatra's legacy, the eternal she.
I am aging, but age cannot wither thee.
You are for ever fresh, for ever young.

May your image leap across the gulf of time
And flash upon my mind
To give me joy, comfort and consolation
In the last cheerless and dismal days of my life.

Indian and Foreign Periodicals

BUDDHA

By

Rabindranath Tagore

Remove the blackness of all sins,
victory be to Thee.
Sprinkle the world with the water
of everlasting life,
Thou who art the fountain of peace,
of welfare, of holiness, of love.
Let the gloom of despair and all evil
dreams vanish
with the radiance of the newly risen
sun of wisdom.
The day is dark with delusions
and the traveller is afraid,
he is distraught with doubts
at the intricacy of diverging paths.
Merciful, rescue him from the peril of
pitfalls,
guide him into freedom from
the meshes of tribulation ;
Thou who art the fountain of peace,
of welfare, of holiness, of love.

—"The Maha Bodhi"

NAMASKAR TO MISS HUI ON HER 80th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

By

Buddhadasa P. Kirthisinghe

USA

The late Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, the Found-
er President of the World Fellowship of Bud-

dhisth said of her, "she symbolizes the highest spirit of Buddhism with compassionate and selfless devotion of humanity". The present President, Her Serene Highness Princess Pismal Diskul stated about her, "she is truly a noble disciple of the Compassionate Buddha".

Let us salute this noble lady's fifty years service to mankind. She commands respect from everywhere and especially from the peoples of Buddhist Asia, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka (Ceylon) to Japan. Singaporeans and Malaysians revere her. In recognition of all these services the President of the Republic of Singapore honoured her by appointing her a Justice of Peace on July 28, 1979.

She was born in Canton, China in the year 1900 and was brought up in Penang, Malaysia. She first studied Chinese and was later educated in the Penang Convent during the day and her late mother Madam Foong Cheng Quai purposely engaged a private tutor to teach her Chinese every evening. When she completed her study in the Penang Convent, she started her profession as a teacher of English in the Hock Kien Girls' Normal School in 1927. After teaching for nearly two years, she went to Canton, China to further her studies in Sun-Yet-Sun University. When she returned she continued teaching English in Hock Kien Girls' Normal School, which was the largest girls' school in Penang. Miss Pitt almost became a Roman Catholic. At this time when the most Venerable Thai Shui went to Penang

after his "World Tour" with his disciples and among his disciples, there was Ven. Tze Hong who converted Miss Pitt, and she became a staunch Buddhist. Under the encouragement of Ven. Tze Hong, the Phor Thay Primary Buddhist School was founded in Penang. Miss Pitt is one of the founder members of the above school. Besides teaching in the Hock Kien Girls' Normal School in the morning, she also taught English and Buddhism in the afternoon.

During the Japanese Occupation, Miss Pitt concentrated all her time to study Buddhism in the Phoe Thay Buddhist Institute in Penang. Later, she followed her religious master Ven. Tze Hong to Singapore to study Buddhism in Leng Poong Phoe Thay Buddhist Institute. After the Japanese Occupation she went back to Penang to teach Buddhism and English in Phor Thay Primary School. At the request of her Religious Master Ven. Tze Hong, Miss Pitt came to Singapore during her Christmas holidays to deliver a series of Lectures on Buddhism at Leng Foong Phoe Thay Buddhist Institute in 1946. Ven. Tze Hong, considering that Singapore is much larger than Penang, instructed and encouraged Miss Pitt to try to establish the first Buddhist School in Singapore. She worked hard the whole year of 1947 and she succeeded in founding Maha Bodhi School in January 1948.

Due to her organizing powers, directive ability, untiring efforts and self-less devotion, the School grew rapidly from a humble beginning with over forty students into a proud position of a five storey school building with nearly two thousand students and is now one of the foremost educational institutions in Singapore. People are particularly struck by her inspiring enthusiasm in promoting educational, cultural and charitable activities.

She is popularly known both as a leading Buddhist and as a Social Welfare personality

in Singapore and in many parts of the world because of her wide range of achievements which are appreciatively recognized by the fine example discharged by her to collect and give cash and kind from time to time to many charitable institutions, schools, hospitals, as well as other organizations irrespective of race, nationality and religion. Her untiring efforts make her associate with all those truly serve mankind. She works selflessly, unremittingly and energetically by participating in fund raising for the poor, the aged, the handicapped, the sick as well as flood victims in other parts of the world.

All the above are so fully recognized that everybody honours and admires her as a shining example of a volunteer who serves the needs of all. This has resulted in her being asked to serve in over twenty distinguished appointments by the Government, the Public and private organizations to serve mankind in general. She was honored in 1964 by the Singapore Government and was awarded the B. B. M. for her Social Service. She has been a Vice President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists since its inception in 1950 in Sri Lanka. She is also the President of the Singapore Regional Centre of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. She recently donated Rs 75,000 to the Malalasekera Foundation in Colombo, Sri Lanka (Ceylon) in the honor of the late Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, Founder President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. In 1975, she donated Rs 150,000 to the Indian Prime Minister's National Relief Fund—to aid flood victims and in 1977 she sent Rs 100,000 to the Sri Lanka President's Cyclone Victims' Fund. She has helped numerous families in Singapore and 32,000 was distributed to various cultural and educational institutions in various Asian lands—thus rising above race, creed and color, exhibiting true Dana (charity) spirit of Buddhism.

The hallmark of her life is selfless service to mankind. May she be blessed with good health and long life, as was her noble mother.

—"The Maha Bodhi"

DESERTS CAN BE RECLAIMER

By Nikolai Maslov

Correspondent, APN in "Science and Engineering" on USSR Publication.

Mankind has a little over 3 billion hectares of arable land at its disposal, using only half of it so far, at that. With the modern rates of population growth, these resources won't last long. Are we moving to a world famine, then? Not at all if the hidden reserves of water is tapped, according to the hydrogeologists of Kazakhstan.

Professor Ufa Akhmedsafin, Director of the Institute of Hydrology and Hydrophysics of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences, believes that mankind has colossal reserves for crop farming in the shape of deserts and semi-deserts. These occupy an area of 30 trillion hectares on the planet—or nearly a quarter of dry land. The deserts will yield great harvests and supply mankind with an abundance of food, no matter how fast the world population might grow, if water can be brought to them. Now, where is this water for the deserts to come from?

Deserts and semi-deserts occupy an area of over 300 million hectares in the Soviet Union, Professor Akhmedsafin says. Kazakhstan accounts for half of these lands. Millions of hectares of potentially fertile land suffer from the shortage of water. The problem is aggravated by the fact that the Republic is rich in metal deposits. Their extraction and processing require great amounts of water. The smelting of a ton of steel, for instance, calls for thousands of tons of it.

Meanwhile, there are 5 times less explored sources of water in Kazakhstan than, in the

Europe, USSR and these are distributed very unevenly over the territory of the Republic. True, water can be brought in through channels from the water-logged areas of the country. One such project has already been implemented in the USSR, with the waters of the River Irtysh (Western Siberia) switched via a 458-km canal to Central Kazakhstan. This, however, is only one way to water the desert. Another method, a more rational and cheap one, consists in extracting water from underground.

VAST RESERVES OF UNDERGROUND WATER

The once popular theory of generation of soil water said that there was very little of it under deserts, Professor Akhmedsafin goes on. Under this theory, soil water could accumulate below the surface only as a result of volcanic eruptions and condensation. And since neither phenomenon occurred in the deserts, and the intensity of evaporation there exceeded the amount of precipitation by a factor of ten, everything led to the conclusion that there was a waterless soil under the shifting sands and plains covered by needlegrasses.

However, there are mountain ridges, capped with eternal snow and glaciers, stretching for thousands of kilometres along the Eastern and Southern borders of Kazakhstan. Thousands of rivers and brooks flow down these mountains to disappear almost instantly in the sands. The overall runoff of Kazakhstan's rivers amounts to 120 billion cubic metres a year, and nearly half of this water is swallowed by the underground depths.

Where do these immense reserves pile up? From where does the.....desert tree, for one, takes its water? And then what about the

springs and wells used by the local cattle breeders? There was no answer to any of these questions within the frame-work of the existing theory.

Many years of hard work by Kazakh hydrogeologists in studying the geological structure of the underground depths have enabled them make a sensational discovery: there are seas of fresh water under the Kazakhstan deserts. Over 7 trillion cubic metres of precious moisture, or the equivalent of 25 Azov Seas, are stored in multitudinous artesian basins and subterranean streams. If all these reserves are taken to the surface at the same time, the Kazakhstan deserts will be covered with a 10-metre-deep layer of water. What's more, it is not sealed reservoirs that are hidden deep under the deserts. Every year, these storerooms are replenished with nearly 50 billion cubic metres of fresh water.

Flowing down mountains and highlands, water first penetrates the earth through cracks, cavities and tectonic fractures to turn later into a continuous flow through troughs, filled with loose deposits. The depths under the Kazakhstan sand dunes currently resemble cyclopic sponges, saturated with a vast amount of water.

Today, the artesian basins of Kazakhstan have been thoroughly investigated. Researchers have compiled fundamental hydrogeological maps and have ascertained the degree of water sufficiency of every area of the Republic. This has made it possible to switch a sizable part of the Republic's economy to subterranean water sources. Artesian basins of fresh water currently provide water for 40 large industrial centres and 1,100 populated areas and help irrigate 30,000 hectares of ploughland and water 75 million hectares of desert pastureland.

This, however, is only a very limited use of the water under the surface. The operational resources of subterranean waters could ensure

the watering of 150 million hectares of farmlands in the course of the growing season alone.

They are already taking these prospects into account in Kazakhstan. For example, following a decision by the Government of the Republic, a Main Board on the construction and operation of irrigation systems on the basis of subterranean water has been set up within the Ministry of Amelioration and Water Management of the Kazakhstan Soviet Socialist Republic recently.

MAYA

Of all the doctrines of Vedanta, the one that is found to be the primary cause of its escapist attitude is the doctrine of illusion or Maya. The theists have objected strongly to the reduction of the world to unreality, while the monists have just as strenuously tried to maintain the positiveness of world appearance while denying its eternalness. The modern critic finds the central doctrine of Maya in monistic worldview the most objectionable because of its effects on the philosophical popular outlooks of the Indian mind. The effects are so pernicious that even where the doctrine of world-reality is advanced, it produces the idea of the undesirability of the world. The representative temper of Vedanta is that of Maya, in which all schools admit the inadequacy of human means, thought and language to transcend the names and forms which constitute the world.

Classical Vedanta and its modern scholars are divided about the exact meaning of Maya, the philosophical and psychological motive for its adoption, its vagueness of nature (inexplicability), and its exact point of origin in the evolution of Vedanta. The critic, while willing to grant that Maya may not be taken as an out-and-out principle of illusion, argues that that is the effect of the doctrine on many

minds. Samkara does not guard sufficiently against the illusory interpretation. As for the realistic standpoint adopted by Samkara in refuting his Buddhist opponents, that is either judged as an outright contradiction of his theoretical stand of mystic intuition of the world's non-finality or as a methodological device by which the provisional concession of the reality of the external world is made a step in the final refutation of it. Hence Advaitic realism is but a further support of Mayavada.

Mayavada completes the negation of the world. The first degree of independent and substantial existence is alone real, philosophically. The third degree of existence in dreams and illusions is called illusion both by philosophy and common sense, but Vedanta degrades the second degree also to the level of the third. The latter two are *avastu* (unsubstantial, *abhava*) in comparison with the first which is *vastu* (substantial). As Maya implies the unseen is more real than the seen, the danger of materialism is avoided; but from the proclamation of unreality of the seen a distrust of facts follows, a distrust of the natural world, which merely hides the real and is not a revelation of it. The *vyavaharika* level of common-sense realism or even scientific investigation is so divorced from the highest spiritual level that the Vedantist cannot escape the temptation to leave behind all the difficulties of the lower level. Knowledge of the empirical level is unreliable while that of the divine is impossible for the many, or reserved for the few. The mind of man becomes depressed by the general distrust of facts, lack of faith in the possibility of mastering inconsistencies by reason. Hopelessness ensues and the only possible attitude seems to be one of stoic indifference. The doctrine of Maya necessarily has a devitalizing effect on life since no theoretical or practical conquest of the

world is possible. The very admission of Maya as a mystery becomes an excuse for not attempting to penetrate it.

Not only does this become the basis of transfer of all interest from normal ends and means of the world, but the Vedantic spiritual quest becomes a journey through unreal objects and experiences; all varied and rich content of the world being dropped out, the journey itself is unreal. The world of becoming in time and space, without any purpose or direction, creation, history, progress, loses its meaning for man. Facts of life are real enough to the common man, but they cannot be related to any purpose of the world creator, so 'the doctrine of Maya is just an attitude towards life of baffled mistrust, undependability, magic'. The world is a magicshow of the Great Magician (*Mayin*) and the implication of *Mayaloka* is of something blinding the eye of knowledge; and spiritual development means being uninfluenced by the powerful attraction of its magic charm; that is, the religious man negates life and the world by mortifying the will to live, renouncing all activity for world improvement, not taking any interest in it. Pessimism in regard to the world is the persistent trait of the Indian mind.

The implications of Mayavada in the sphere of religion are found to be as destructive as in the sphere of the phenomenal. *Isvara*, the theistic God, in contrast to the highest reality of Brahman, is empirical only, the first product of Maya, though still above it; hence monism offers a false God to a false world to the bitter chagrin of theistic Vedanta, which opposes this conclusion with all its might. Nor can the common man find any hope or consolation in this theism which makes God hold only in the world of appearance, not in reality; for he is destined to remain in the sphere of religion,

which, he is told, is false, while the philosopher, from his transcendental level of reality, looks down condescendingly on the state of unreality of the majority without making the effort to disturb them. The religious perspective is in error which mistakes God for Brahman and has to be transcended by yoga.

Such conclusions are accentuated by the negation of human personality, which follows upon Maya. The standpoint of reality postulates that each soul is the whole, undivided Brahman, but the standpoint of Maya postulates a multiplicity of limited, finite souls in Samsara. In reality there is no individual, separative self, for the illusive psychic Jiva is no more in it. Such is the destructive zeal of Vedanta that it seeks to suppress altogether the finite and its experiences in favour of the infinite. All that is value to the individual—personal freedom, personality, selfhood—is suppressed as fictitious and empty.

With the denial of the reality of the empirical self, moral obligations also cease. Morality exists only in view of the soul as distinct from a real body, but Mayavada denies the soul's connection with body, mind and senses. Since it explains away all evils along with the world, there can be no incentive for moral improvement in the individual or in society. As the evils and sufferings of an illusory world are also illusory, what need is there for effort on the part of the individual to overcome illusory evils? There is no need for man to distinguish good from bad, higher from lower value, and to labour for promotion of the good or higher value. Such a depreciation of moral sense makes expediency the highest virtue. All being equally unreal, either man is free to choose as prudence dictates, or might becomes the standard of what is morally right.

(Dr. Vinita Wanchoo in "Prabuddha Bharata")

BULGARIA-INDIA

Bulgaria and India lie at a distance of more than 10,000 km from each other. The two countries are incomparable in terms of territory and population. Yet, there is a lot in common in the life-style, traditions and cultures of their peoples.

A few years ago the Indian professor Lokesh Chandra was visiting Bulgaria. An authority on eastern cultures, he showed an interest in the archaeological excavations in this country. Among other things he was shown three statuettes found in north-eastern Bulgaria—the area where the foundations of the Bulgarian state were laid 13 centuries ago—most probably of deities, worshipped by the Proto-Bulgarians. 'But these are Buddhist statuettes!' The eminent scholar exclaimed. 'It seems our relations date back more than 1300 years.'

In fact these statuettes are not unique. Archaeologists can show us many others of a similar nature. There are things common in the other spheres of the cultural and material life of the two peoples. Philologists have listed several hundred common or similar words in Hindi and Bulgarian; furthermore there is a great similarity between the Bulgarian and the Indian folk songs, especially the songs of northern India, between the Bulgarian and the Indian folk costumes and embroidery patterns. The same applies to woodcarving, miniatures, mediaeval icon painting.

Regrettably the great distance and the different historical destinies did not favour the development and enrichment of the similar elements in the life and cultures of the two peoples. On the contrary, a great deal of what was fresh and vivid in the past, has now faded into oblivion. There is one thing however which has not been affected by time or the great distance—the feelings of mutual

sympathy and respect between the two peoples. And this is no idle talk. History—distant or more recent—has left us many examples in this respect. In 1857, when the Indian people rose in arms against the colonizers, the great Bulgarian revolutionary and writer Georgi Rakovski, in the newspaper he published, issued the ardent appeal: 'India for the Indians!', whereby the leader of the national liberation struggle of the then enslaved Bulgarian people voiced the sympathies and the revolutionary solidarity of the Bulgarians with the Indian patriots.

The wide circles of the intelligentsia took a keen interest in India, studied its eventful history, its rich ancient culture, read its writers, philosophers and thinkers.

In the autumn of 1926 Rabindranath Tagore visited Sofia. Although short, his visit became a memorable event for the Bulgarian capital. The cultural public in Sofia welcomed Tagore as a great writer whose works were the object of particular interest in the country. Furthermore, it regarded him as one of the most illustrious sons of India. Today some older writers, artists, cultural and public figures who met the legendary writer 54 years ago, still recall details from their meetings and speak of Tagore as of a Biblical sage.

Judging from his farewell words, Tagore himself was happy to meet the progressive artistic intelligentsia in Sofia: 'I found a home in your hearts. I will take away precious memories of you. I leave you carrying away the best of feelings for the Bulgarians, for the Bulgarian people.'

In the 1920s and 1930s the interest towards India was particularly keen in Bulgaria. In that period alone, 34 books of fiction were published in Bulgarian translation. Boris Georgiev, an eminent Bulgarian artist, lived and worked in India for a number of years.

His paintings and his portraits of Rabindranath Tagore in particular mark a peak in Bulgarian fine arts.

The victory of the socialist revolution in Bulgaria in 1944 and the proclamation of India's independence in 1947 opened up new, and broader opportunities for a closer acquaintance and contacts between the two peoples. These included translation and publication of books, visits of artists, the organizing of art exhibitions and exchange of delegations. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the two free and independent countries on December 22, 1954 marked the beginning of an active and efficient mutually advantageous cooperation which has been going on for 25 years in the field of culture, economy, trade, state and public life.

The exchange of top level visits gave a strong impetus to the contacts between the two countries, to the building of relations of a new type. Particularly important in this respect were the visits of the first state leaders—Todor Zhivkov to India in 1969 and 1976 and Indira Gandhi to Bulgaria in 1967.

The relations of mutual respect and trust, of a wide-ranging and efficient cooperation in various spheres of life were evidenced by the results of the visits to Bulgaria of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan as Vice President (1956) and the then President V. V. Giri (1970) and of Prime Minister Stanko Todorov (1974) and Lyudmila Zhivkova, President of the Committee for Culture (1976) to India.

This year the Indian President Sanjiva Reddy is expected to come to Bulgaria on a visit postponed from last year.

Five trade agreements have been signed between India and Bulgaria since the establishment of diplomatic relations. According to the Long-term Agreement on Trade in force since January 1, 1979 payments between the two countries are effected in convertible

currency. This type of payments actually eliminates any contingent limitations in mutual trade and is a condition for its rapid development. In 1979 trade between Bulgaria and India topped the \$55 million mark. Bulgaria exports to India mainly products of the chemical industry, metallurgy, pharmaceuticals, machine engineering, electronics, and electrical engineering, and imports from India, apart from the traditional Indian goods of agricultural origin, industrial products—medicines, chemicals, metal processing machines, textile and road construction machines, consumer goods.

This year the volume of trade between the two countries will notably increase. Possibilities are studied for the purchasing—on a long-term basis—of Indian iron ore, which will be offset by an increased export from Bulgaria of urea, soda ash, steel products, non-ferrous metals, ships, tankers, etc. According to an agreement reached between the two countries, they will make efforts—in the 1980-1985 period—to double their annual volume of trade as compared to 1980.

Cultural relations are also making headway. On the basis of the 1963 agreement and the regularly signed two-year programmes, cultural exchanges between the two countries are constantly expanding and spreading to all spheres of cultural life.—The works of the modern Indian writers Prem Chand, Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Krishan Chander, to mention but a few, are published in the Bulgarian language in great circulation and are instantly sold out. The comparatively recent editions of the ancient classical epos 'Mahabharata' and 'Ramayana' (1972) and the de luxe edition of 'Panchatantra' (1977) translated by the outstanding Bulgarian poet Yordan Milev with illustrations by artist Ivan Kyosseu have already become a bibliographi-

cal rarity.

The list of literary events highlighting the cultural relations between Bulgaria and India is too long to be quoted here. There is a common endeavour to study and bring to light everything of value created by the two peoples in their age-old history.

"News From Bulgaria"

MAN-MADE GEMS

by A. Konstantinov

Fianites are called the "miracle of the century", which is not much of an overstatement. Scientists say that some properties of the artificial crystals are even better than of the natural stones. They are more infusible and transparent than the diamonds. Unlike the existing methods of growing artificial stones, the production of fianites does not require costly primary materials and takes less time than, say, growing synthetic garnets.

The in-plant laboratory continues working to improve the colour and the output of the workable material. They can control many gem-growing processes and produce stones of 18 shades. Now they are going to produce light blue crystals, which are now in vogue and in great demand.

The fianites are now used in many national industries and interest abroad in them is growing. Visitors to the international fairs in Bulgaria, East Germany, France, the United States and other countries admired these new synthetic stones. They are beautiful indeed, sparkling polychromatic colours. Are they at all inferior to natural gems?

"Science and Engineering"

THE MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL BASE OF SOVIET AGRICULTURE

By APN Correspondent

Soviet agriculture's entire material and technical base is undergoing deep qualitative and quantitative changes in the main areas of its development—all-round mechanization, chemicalization and land amelioration.

Massive capital investments are earmarked to strengthen this base. Overall spendings on agricultural development by the state and the collective farms which were 12,300 million roubles in 1965, rose to 35,300 million in 1979 and this year will stand at 37,000 million roubles. During the current five-year period they will top 173,000 million roubles.

The basic production assets of the state and collective farms and inter-farm associations have risen three-fold over 1965 to 200,000 million roubles at the beginning of 1980. Per hundred hectares of agricultural land, the availability of capital amounted to almost 37,000 roubles by late 1978, a three-fold increase over 1965, and the capital to labour ratio amounted to 7,900 roubles as against 2,400.

In 1965 Soviet agriculture got 240,000 tractors and in 1979 as many as 354,000. Supplies of trucks, including specialised trucks and undercarriages, grew from 90,000 to 266,000 during the same period; grain harvester combines from 79,000 to 112,000; maize combine harvesters from 100 to 6,000; pick-up balers from 6,000 to 34,000; milking machines from 6,100 to 52,000, etc.

Under the current year's plan, the state and collective farms will get 344,000 tractors, 270,000 trucks, close to 118,000 grain harvester combines, 293,000 tractor trailers, and a lot of other machinery.

All of the basic field work—ploughing, the sowing of grain, cotton and sugar beets, the gathering in of cereals and ensilage crops—has

been fully mechanized to date. Mechanization will soon be completed of potato planting, inter-row cultivation of plantations of sugar beets, maize and cotton, grass-cutting, grain cleaning, maize harvesting for hay, etc. A lot has been done in recent years to mechanize livestock-breeding.

RESUSCITATION SERVICE IN USSR

Resuscitation is a special profession. Resuscitation service became possible only with the appearance of electronics, electric stimulators, lasers and devices capable of taking upon themselves the functions of man's most important organs.

A special place among these devices belongs to rapidly operating diagnostic apparatuses. They help the doctor to have a clear picture of the patient's state at once: pulse respiration rate, general metabolism, biochemical blood quotient, arterial and venous pressure, brain biological currents, and other vitally important parameters. The data of this proximate analysis make it possible to use such apparatuses as a defibrillator or "artificial lungs".

The development of resuscitation service and the appearance of new technology have made some changes in our views concerning the use of the already established methods of treatment. Some ten years ago we believed, that without reason, that transfusion of whole blood would be used on a larger scale. But science has made corrections in our forecasts. It has turned out that in many cases there is no need to transfuse whole blood, it is enough to confine to its separate fractions and components. Today whole blood is transfused more rarely. More often we transfuse its plasma, erythrocytic mass, leukocytic part and other components. Everyone of them

requires specific methods of storage. Hence, the advantages of such transfusion are obvious. The recently invented method of freezing erythrocytes makes it possible to preserve them for 10-15 years during which they do not lose their function of oxygen carries.

NEW METHOD

The development of resuscitation service has also been promoted by the appearance of hyperbaric oxygenation, a very effective

method in saving life. The essence of the method boils down to the following: the patient is placed in an altitude chamber where pressure is raised to two or three atmospheres thanks to which the liquid part of the blood is rapidly impregnated with a great amount of oxygen. This method helps the organism to overcome grave oxygen starvation, which is especially important in treating such dangerous diseases as gas gangrene, phlegmon, gas poisoning and others. Moscow has the world's largest barocentre with special warms and baro-operating rooms.

"Science & Engineering" Information Dept
USSR Consulate General Calcutta.

